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Russia: Dudayev Proposes Holding Direct Talks With Yeltsin

LD0804101396 Moscow Radiostantsiya Ekho Moskvy in Russian 0800 GMT 8 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Dzhokhar Dudayev himself has put forward a proposal to have direct talks with Boris Yeltsin through Russian State Duma Deputy Konstantin Borovoy. Dudayev said that he would like to have direct talks with Yeltsin since many of those in Moscow who are responsible for settling the Chechen conflict are not committed to the talks.

[begin Dudayev recording] I propose that we do not have any mediators here. We do not have to deal through foreign maharajahs. They are not [?suitable] because behind them there is no real force compelling them. [end recording]

However, Borovoy, who has provided our radio station with a transcript of a telephone conversation with Dudayev, said that Dudayev was also prepared to hold a dialogue with Yeltsin's representative, for example with Grigoriy Yavlinskiy or Boris Gromov.

Russia: Dudayev Proposes 'Cadre Purge,' Election Campaign Suspension

LD0704172896 Moscow INFORMATSIONNOYE AGENTSTVO EKHO MOSKVY in Russian 1655 GMT 7 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The editorial office of Ekho Moskvy radio station has a telephone transcript of a statement by Chechen opposition leader Dzhokhar Dudayev, dated 7 April 1996, in which he proposes his plan for a peaceful settlement of the conflict in Chechnya.

In Dudayev's opinion, there is not a single legitimate branch of power in Russia, nor a single state structure, which submits to the laws or that carries out these laws.

"A timely cadre purge [Russian: kadrovaya zachistka] in Russia's power structures is the only measure that will localize the crisis and preserve the fundamental bases of democracy and law," Dudayev's statement says.

Dudayev means by the concept of "cadre purge" the arrests of First Deputy Prime Minister Oleg Soskovets; Petr Deynekin, commander in chief of the Russian Air Force; Doku Zavgayev, head of the Chechen Government; Vyacheslav Tikhomirov, commander in chief of the joint grouping of federal forces in Chechnya; and Anatoliy Shkirko, present commander of internal troops of the Russian Interior Ministry.

In addition, Dudayev proposes dismissing from their posts Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin; Mikhail Kolesnikov, chief of General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces; Interior Minister Anatoliy Kulikov; Russian General Prosecutor Yuriy Skuratov; and Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov.

Dudayev also thinks it necessary to carry out a "purge" in the Russian Federal Assembly, "with the aim of revealing criminal elements that do not adhere to the principles of democracy and law and who were elected to the supreme body illegally."

In Dudayev's opinion, Russian President Boris Yeltsin "is today no longer able" to implement the above-mentioned measures. In his statement he proposes suspending the election campaign and convening an all-people's assembly in St. Petersburg under the leadership of democrats such as Yuriy Afanasyev, Gavriil Popov, and Anatoliy Sobchak.

Russia: Yeltsin Willing To Start Negotiations Through Intermediaries

LD0704045796 Moscow Radiostantsiya Ekho Moskvy in Russian 0200 GMT 7 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Russian president has stated that he has sent a telegram to Dzhokhar Dudayev and Doku Zavgayev confirming his willingness to start negotiations by means of intermediaries. In this telegram, Boris Yeltsin confirmed that military operations in Chechnya have ceased.

Speaking at a congress of his supporters, the head of state noted that the presidents of Tatarstan and Kazakhstan have already started acting as intermediaries.

Russia: Some Chechen Commanders Said Ready To Resume Talks

LD0804121696 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1139 GMT 8 Apr 96

[By Oleg Velichko]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 8 (Itar-Tass) — "Some of the field commanders in Chechnya are ready to resume talks with federal authorities and work on a special supervisory commission," Russian Minister for Nationalities and Federal Relations Vyacheslav Mikhaylov said today.

He went on to say, however, that Dzhokhar Dudayev's "attitude to the work of this commission is negative." He explained further that "Dudayev is only strong in conditions of warfare and he stands to gain from the state of war in the republic."

Mikhaylov, who was speaking at a press conference in Moscow, noted that "the last summer's work could provide a basis for coming talks with the Dudayev group

— out of 40 items on the agenda, we failed to agree on a mere two points."

He admitted that one of the key issues which will be difficult to negotiate was the status of Chechnya.

"If talks on this question do not succeed, they will have to be put off until a later date and negotiations should focus instead on terms of preparation for the elections to the Chechen parliament, the formation of executive power structures and the drafting of an agreement on the division of powers between the centre and the republic," Mikhaylov proposed.

Mikhaylov said that he had information about Dzhokhar Dudayev's positive response to the initiative put forth by President of Tatarstan Mintimer Shaymiyev. Efforts continue to probe which variant is better — direct talks with federal authorities or talks through intermediaries, the Russian Minister said.

Mikhaylov said the State Commission formed by the Russian President with Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin at the head would meet once a week to focus on four main directions of efforts — economic and financial, political, military and constitutional.

According to Mikhaylov, President Yeltsin and the commission members were due to meet on April 11 to consider financing and a package of political issues.

Mikhaylov said he personally favoured the resumption of activity of a mixed supervisory commission on Chechen territory.

Russia: Yeltsin Endorses State Commission for Chechen Settlement

LD0504182396 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English
1800 GMT 5 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 5 (Itar-Tass) — The press service of the Russian president issued the following statement on Friday:

"The President of the Russian Federation, Boris Yeltsin, issued a decree endorsing members and a statue of a State Commission of the Russian Federation for the settlement of the crisis in Chechnya. The commission was established for purposes of coordinating efforts made by federal bodes of power for the normalisation of the situation in the Chechen republic and control over the implementation of the programme of the Chechen settlement. The commission shall operate in contact with both chambers of the Russian Federal Assembly, plenipotentiary representatives of the Russian president and government in the Chechen republic, federal bodies of the executive power and bodies of state power of the Chechen republic.

"In accordance with the president's request, Chairman of the Russian government Viktor Chernomyrdin will administer general management of the Commission.

"The Commission endorsed by the president includes representatives of the Russian government and the chambers of the Federal Assembly. There is a group of experts set up under the head of the Commission who will analyse and summarise information on the progress of the implementation of the programme, submit regular reports to the Russian president and prepare the necessary analytical data for the Commission.

"Resolutions passed by the Commission in the framework of its competence are mandatory for the federal bodies of the executive power, bodies of the executive power of subjects of the Russian Federation, enterprises, institutions, organizations taking part in the normalisation of political and socio-economic situation in the Chechen republic.

List of members of the State Commission for the settlement of the Chechen crisis

Viktor Chernomyrdin	Chairman of the Government of the Russian Federation ,chairman of the Commission)
Yegor Stroyev	Chairman of the Federation Council of the Federal Assembly
Gennadiy Seleznev	Chairman of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation
Vladimir Kadannikov	First Deputy Chairman of the Government of the Russian Federation (deputy chairman of the Commission)
Oleg Lobov	Secretary of the Security Council of the Russian Federation
Yuriy Baturin	Aide of the President of the Russian Federation
Nikolay Fedosov	Plenipotentiary representative of the government of the Russian Federation in Chechnya

Viktor Chernomyrdin	Chairman of the Government of the Russian Federation (chairman of the Commission)
Mikhail Barsukov	Director of the Russian Federal Security Service
Nikolay Bezborodov	Deputy of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation
Doku Zavgayev	Head of the Chechen republic
Vladimir Zorin	Chairman of the State Duma Committee for Nationalities
Valentin Kovalev	Justice Minister of the Russian Federation
Viktor Kokov	Deputy Chairman of the Federation Council
Mikhail Kolesnikov	First Deputy Defence Minister Chief of the General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces
Anatoliy Kotkov	Deputy of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation
Anatoliy Kulikov	Russian Interior Minister
Magomedali Magomedov	Chairman of the State Council of Dagestan
Petr Marchenko	Head of the Stavropol regional administration
Vyacheslav Mikhaylov	Russian Minister for Nationalities and Federal Relations
Mintimer Shaymiyev	President of Tatarstan."

Russia: Chechen Commission Sends Statement to State Duma

LD0604151496 Moscow Russian Public Television First Channel Network in Russian 1400 GMT 6 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The presidium of the Supreme Soviet and the Committee for National Accord of the Chechen Republic today adopted a joint statement addressed to the State Duma in which they request measures to be taken to end the killing of innocent people in Chechnya and servicemen of the Russian Army.

Russia: Chernomyrdin Notes New Phase in Settling Chechen Crisis

LD0604141296 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1259 GMT 6 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Apr 6 (Interfax) — A new phase in settling the crisis — the stage of revival — is beginning in Chechnya, said chairman of the National Commission for Settling the Crisis in Chechnya Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin on Saturday at the first session held by the commission set up under President Yeltsin's orders.

"The federal authorities and Chechnya's constructive forces, supported by the selfless activity of Russian troops, have created the necessary preconditions for a crucial turn in the situation in Chechnya by means of consistent political and socioeconomic measures," Chernomyrdin pointed out. Now a new stage in the efforts to settle the crisis — the stage of revival — is beginning in Chechnya, he said. Its main goals are to rebuild the local economy and social security, and create normal living conditions for the people of Chechnya, he noted.

"The president endowed the commission with ample powers," Chernomyrdin stressed. "In fact the entire responsibility for implementing the program for solving the crisis in Chechnya lies on us now," he said.

Chernomyrdin said that his commission should give top priority to resolving socioeconomic problems connected with funding the restoration works, securing material and technical supplies for them, and ensuring social and compensation payments to the population. Top priority must also be given to measures ensuring effective inter-Chechen political dialogue and preparations for electing Chechnya's legislative authorities, to ways build legal foundations for settling the crisis and to the military aspect of solution to it.

His commission, Chernomyrdin said, "has a high degree of freedom in taking decisions, up to correcting stages of the program and working out additional measures to resolve the crisis taking into account local developments." Decisions taken by the commission are mandatory to all who are involved in the endeavors to normalize the political and socioeconomic situation in Chechnya, he said.

The tasks faced by the commission include efforts to improve the mechanism of financing the restoration of constitutional law and order, economy and social security in Chechnya, Chernomyrdin said. "We must work to make the process of achieving socially significant results stable and permanent," he declared. To establish a clear procedure of transferring money and impose strict control that would rule out the possibility of pilferage and abuses is our short-term task, Chernomyrdin pointed out. According to him, decisions on these issues will be taken in the next few days.

As for the commission's political work, it will be aimed at vigorously and steadily supporting Chechnya's government and its head, strengthening their prestige and helping them exercise their powers. The federal authorities will continue to work to consolidate the system of legitimate government bodies in Chechnya and implement a wide range of energetic measures aimed at preparations for elections to Chechnya's national assembly and for presidential elections in Russia.

According to Chernomyrdin, "today it is essential to expand security and peace zones in Chechnya on the basis of signing and observing trilateral protocols on peace and concord." He linked the allocation of federal funds to Chechnya to the establishment of peace and accord zones. "Financial aid will be given to the areas, where there are such zones, where there are guarantees for maintaining stability," he said.

With reference to the military aspect of settlement in Chechnya Chernomyrdin said: the measures taken in this area aim to "consistently establish law and order throughout Chechnya, liquidate hotbeds of terrorism and terrorist bands, prevent terrorist acts and sabotage, disarm and neutralize illegal armed formations." "The power structures must focus their efforts on combating terrorism in the first place," he pointed out.

According to Chernomyrdin, "strictest measures with the use of all admissible methods will be taken, if terrorism is displayed in Chechnya and gets spread to other areas."

His commission will convene every Tuesday in the government building, he said. The former director of Russia's federal security service Sergey Stepashin, who is now in charge of the government's administrative staff, was appointed as executive secretary of the commission.

At its next session scheduled for April 9 the commission will consider issues connected with redeployment of troops and transfer of funds allocated for Chechnya.

According to Chernomyrdin, commission members will be received by President Boris Yeltsin on April 10.

Secretary of Russia's Security Council Oleg Lobov was one of those who attended Saturday's session held by the commission.

Russia: Chechen Settlement Working Group Holds First Session

MM0804103396 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 6 Apr 96 p 1

[Report by Aleksandr Pelts: "Who Will Be Working in the Russian Federation President's 'Situation Room'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The first session of the Russian Federation president's working group on the conclusion of combat operations and the settlement of the situation in Chechnya has been held. The creation of the working group is just one of the stages in the program for settling the Chechen crisis made public in the Russian president's 31 March message. The group has nine members. They are mainly representatives of the Presidential Staff. Emil Pain has been appointed to head it.

The working group is a consultative body under the Russian president and provides information and analytical support for implementation of the program for settling the Chechen crisis. Its main tasks are to monitor the implementation of the program, prepare the appropriate regular reports to the Russian president, analyze current information about the situation in Chechnya, and prepare timely proposals to promptly neutralize factors that may destabilize the situation or threaten to disrupt various provisions of the program.

We will not list all the group's tasks — there are quite a lot of them. Just as it has quite a lot of rights, moreover. Given that implementation of the program is an extremely complex business requiring an immediate response to any changes in the situation, the group has been given the right to request and obtain the requisite material from leaders of subunits of the Russian Federation Presidential Staff, the Security Council apparatus, and leaders of federal executive organs, and to use state, including government, communications systems.

It is therefore no accident that the group's first session was held in the Russian Federation president's so-called "situation room," where the group's leader, Emil Pain, demonstrated the automated system for monitoring the program's implementation developed in conjunction with the Federal Government Communications and Information Agency. He stressed that it is also a kind of "kitchen" for the adoption of political decisions.

The automated monitoring system makes it possible to analyze down to the smallest detail the implementation of all sections of the program and monitor the attainment of both short-term and long-term objectives. The whole situation and database is illuminated on special monitors.

The military section of the program is the shortest. Naturally enough, this involves the cessation of combat operations and the redeployment and withdrawal of the troops. Admittedly, when commenting on the program working group members nonetheless stipulated that the federal troops' withdrawal will be linked to appropriate actions on the part of the pro-Dudayev forces guaranteeing the gradual demilitarization of the republic.

The main point that Emil Pain thought it necessary to stress is that never before has such a powerful structure been set up (bearing in mind the formation of a State Commission) capable of resolving the clearly protracted Chechen crisis. Every opportunity to resolve it now really exists. It was, admittedly, noted that the logic of the program is that neither of the sides should prepare to be the obvious "victor." Everyone must gain. Because everyone needs peace and stability.

Russia: Yeltsin Says Forces Fulfilling Order on Chechnya

LD0604125196 Moscow 2x2 Television in Russian 1200 GMT 6 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Speaking at the congress of the All-Russian Movement of his supporters on 6 April, Boris Yeltsin reiterated that the troops in Chechnya are fulfilling his instructions on ceasing active military operations.

[begin Yeltsin recording] You can all go off and see for yourselves — the State Duma in full complement, the Council of the Federation, you know, anybody at all, the prosecutor's office, the courts, everything! You will not find any sort of military adventure, so to speak, being undertaken on the initiative, so to speak, of our forces there any more. No! [end recording]

Yeltsin also announced that he had sent a telegram to Doku Zavgayev and to Dzhokhar Dudayev as well. Yeltsin named President Shaymiyev of Tatarstan and President Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan as mediators at possible talks with Dudayev. At the same time, he stressed that the territory of Russia is unified and indivisible.

Russia: War Seen Continuing Despite Yeltsin Peace Plan

MM0804114696 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 6 Apr 96 pp 1, 2

[Report by Viktor Sokirko: "Week of Peace in Chechnya: Fighting on Land and in the Air. Dudayev's Men Down a Russian Plane, After Which the Military Say There Is No Point in Talking With the Gunmen"]

[FBIS Translated Text] There have been no particular changes at all in the reports from Chechnya: The war has continued since the entry into force of the president's peace plan. People die daily. Shooting continues both in the foothills and in Groznyy itself. Fighting continued yesterday in eight population centers in the southern and southeastern mountainous rayons of Chechnya. Dudayev's men are putting up determined resistance to federal troops carrying out "special measures against gunmen." Military confrontation continues in Nozhay-Yurtovskiy, Vedenskiy, Shatoyskiy, and Urus-Martanovskiy Rayons. What then has changed since 1 April?

Official information from the federal command on the operational situation in Chechnya is very meager and vague. This is understandable, the military have received the order to "clear out" population centers where gunmen have taken up position, and must at the same time preserve their status as peacekeepers. "There are a lot of oddities in this war," I am told by the military. "And we are no longer surprised when we have to report that a village has signed a peace treaty after it has been stormed."

The truth will out. If aircraft are used during an operation it is somehow absurd to talk about "local fighting."

The Russian Su-25 ground-attack aircraft downed by guerrillas over the village of Goyty, Goytskiy Rayon, 4 April is unnecessary confirmation of this. An operation to crush Dudayev's fighters, who are putting up a fierce defense, has been going on in that village for two days now, and the appearance of a combat plane in the sky can in no way be related to a "pleasure" flight.

The pilot of the downed aircraft was lucky: After ejecting he landed outside the gunmen's lines. He was picked up within five minutes by an Mi-8 helicopter and ferried to Khankola airfield on the outskirts of Groznyy.

It is presumed that the aircraft was downed by a U.S.-made Stinger, with which Dudayev's men are equipped. The military consider that there is no point in talking with the gunmen after this incident.

The guerrillas now employ their own aircraft, which are based in Azerbaijan, not far from Baku. Their An-24 and An-26 transport planes deliver weapons and munitions at night to operational airfields in the south of Chechnya. Provocative rocket and bombing raids on civilian population centers figure among the missions carried out by Dudayev's aircraft and helicopter squadrons.

The first week of "peace" in Chechnya ends the way it began — with war.

Russia: Expert Alleges Dudayev's Aircraft in Turkey, Azerbaijan

LD0504201096 Moscow NTV in Russian 1800 GMT 5 Apr 96

[From the "Segodnya" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Announcer Tatyana Mitkova] Some experts assert that the bombings of Chechen villages are the work of Dzhokhar Dudayev himself, who has air bases in Azerbaijan and Turkey. Aleksey Kondulukov continues the theme.

[begin recording] [Kondulukov, over video of aircraft wreckage, aircraft burning on tarmac] The report that Dudayev has aircraft can hardly be called sensational. It was clear from the very start that all the aircraft of the Republic of Ichkeria [Chechnya] were unlikely to be located at Groznyy airfield, where in the first days of the Chechen campaign [Russian Air Force Commander in Chief Petr] Deynekin's hawks dropped bombs.

Today, however, after unidentified flying objects bombed the Chechen village of Shalezhi for the second time, a report by an expert at the Defense Research Institute, has aroused particular interest. Anton Surikov, quoting information from the Russian special services, asserts that Dudayev still has three Mi-8 helicopters and eight An-24 and An-26 cargo planes. Surikov says that they are all in Turkey, at military air bases inaccessible for NATO inspection. Dudayev's aircraft are mainly engaged in smuggling flights into Chechnya from Pakistan and Turkey.

[Unidentified speaker] Military equipment, weapons, munitions, even orders and medals made for Dudayev are going there, as well as narcotic substances being brought through the same channels, mainly heroin and other opium-based narcotics, and also counterfeit currency, mainly from the Iranian town of Zahedan.

[Kondulukov] The airfield at Nasosnaya, in Azerbaijan, and a number of closed Azerbaijani army installations are also used for smuggling and getting military supplies to the fighters, according to Surikov.

[Surikov] The Azerbaijani army helicopter regiment in the village of Zabrat-2 has several Mi-8 helicopters at its disposal, which are directly controlled by the Dudayev fighters. These helicopters do not bear identification symbols, therefore commissions of the Federal Security Service or the Federal Border Service that could in principle visit this place cannot prove anything.

[Kondulukov] Reports like this have already been published in the press, and even President Yeltsin has accused Pakistan, Azerbaijan, and Turkey of complicity with the fighters. The Defense Research Institute expert, however, who is close to military structures, goes further. According to Surikov, Dudayev is also using military aircraft.

[Surikov] There is evidence to show that Azerbaijani army Su-24 strike aircraft periodically arrive at a reserve landing strip at Baku airfield for Dudayev's use. Azerbaijan has seven of these fighters, in all. According to some reports — which have not been finally confirmed, I stress once again — Russian Federation identification symbols are put on these strike aircraft, after which they carry out combat sorties over the territory of Chechnya, mainly for the purposes of provocation. That is, mainly provocative bombings of those settlements that have signed agreements with the federal forces to observe neutrality and not render assistance to the illegal armed formations.

[Kondulukov] It is not known whether there is any real basis to the information Surikov gives. The embassies of Turkey and Azerbaijan issued the appropriate denials almost instantly today. This is perhaps all just an attempt to divert suspicion from Russian Federation pilots, if the latter, for example, bombed Shalezhi by mistake.

On the other hand, it is doubtful the Russian generals will allow themselves to be so stupidly exposed, by organizing a second air raid on a village where the Prosecutor's Office staff are already working. [end recording]

Russia: Yavlinskiy, Lebed Address Antiwar Rally in Moscow

LD0604141996 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1259 GMT 6 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Apr 6 (Interfax) — About 1000 people from different democratic movements gathered in Moscow's Pushkin Square to express their protest against military actions continuing in Chechnya.

The Yabloko movement leader Grigoriy Yavlinskiy said addressing the meeting that the war in Chechnya is conducive to destroying Russia's statehood, and called for bringing those responsible for continuing it to justice. According to Yavlinskiy, the president's plan for settling the conflict in Chechnya is "unaccomplishable from both the military and the political point of view, since the people of Chechnya ignore the president's peace initiatives."

The former Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev told those present that the problem of Chechnya should have been resolved in November of 1994. He also condemned military actions in Chechnya and spoke in support of peaceful political steps.

State Duma deputy General Aleksandr Lebed said that the hard situation in Russia's armed forces is clearly reflected in military actions in Chechnya, "where the army is a pawn to the criminal policy pursued by the authorities."

Those who organized the meeting urged participants in it to increase public pressure on the government in order to end the war in Chechnya.

The rally was held under the following slogans: "War in Chechnya is Sister to War in Afghanistan," "Stop War in Chechnya!", "Those Who Profit from War in Chechnya Should Be Punished!"

Interfax's correspondent reports that participants in the meeting collected signatures in favor of stopping military actions in Chechnya. According to them, "several million people" have already signed that demand.

Russia: Yeltsin's Chechnya Initiative Seen as Western Provocation

MK0604124496 Moscow ZAVTRA in Russian No. 14, Apr 96 (signed to press 2 Apr 1996) p 1

[Unattributed "Intelligence Report of 'Den' Security Service" under the "Scoreboard" rubric"]

[FBIS Translated Text] According to our sources, the whole story of B. Yeltsin's pseudo-peacemaking initiative was pushed through and realized by Yuriy Baturin. The pushing was done in absolute secrecy. The Security Council's plan for resolving the Chechen problem, which was signed by the president, had nothing in common with the surrender to Dudayev that was announced on television. The former plan was not undermined by Baturin — his foreign masters recommended to him to dull the vigilance of the Security Council members and to realize on the sly his criminal initiative fraught with destruction. The same masters ordered Baturin to realize his parallel initiative in the way that is most devastating for Yeltsin. For a week fabricated information was fed to Yeltsin with regard to the effectiveness of the peace initiative proposed by Baturin.

This information was prepared by foreign specialists, who took account of all the president's psychological peculiarities. The sources report that B.N. [Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin] was effectively subjected to a program of intensive psychological pressure, using the most up-to-date capabilities. Concurrently an attempt was made to cut off the president from all sources of authentic information.

In this regard it is extremely important to bear in mind that two weeks earlier the same Yuriy Baturin had prodded the president into a bloody — and harmful for the country — clash with the Duma and the Russian Communist Party. Despite his assurances to the contrary, it is in Baturin's laboratory that documents on disbanding the Duma, banning the Communist Party, and interning opposition members on a mass scale were drawn up. It is also worthwhile to recall Baturin's role in the creation of Edict 1400, which sealed the fate of the White House in 1993.

Our sources assert that through channels similar to those Baturin used for his provocation the opposition was pushed in a coordinated manner toward speeding up the adoption of its generally correct, but inopportune decisions on denouncing the Belovezhskaya Pushcha accords, fitting them into the overall concept of the provocation.

Concurrently with the efforts to stir up conflict, comprehensive special operations were mounted to cut off or to neutralize all influences and forces capable of easing or resolving the conflict between the authorities and the opposition.

Baturin and his masters were certain that a violent action, which would have been damaging for the country and all political forces defending state interests, would be launched without fail on 17 March. The failure of this action triggered a frantic gush of activity aimed at implementing another idea damaging to the country, this time under the guise of peacemaking.

The upcoming signing of even relatively weak Russian-Belarusian reunification treaties is getting on the West's nerves and prompting it to energetic actions. As part of these measures, it was decided to sacrifice Yeltsin, who authorized the reunification. The enemies of Russia need neither Yeltsin with his team that is moving increasingly toward patriotism, nor Zyuganov. Moreover, despite Clinton's statements and even his actual interests, powerful forces in the United States and Europe do not need Russian elections at all. Our sources have noticed an upsurge in the activity of former CIA officers from among the Republicans who served there under Bush, before Clinton arrived in the White House, whose actual goal is to influence the results of the U.S. elections in the Republicans' favor by destabilizing the situation in Russia. Former Vice President Dan Quayle, who arrived in Moscow on a special mission, has been pursuing this goal nearly explicitly. People from Stanford and Georgetown, who have been inserted in Clinton's entourage by the Republicans and who have replaced the relatively loyal to Russia Strobe Talbott, have been more secretive.

These anti-Russian "scholars in plainclothes" operate under a controlled conflict program aimed at undermining Russian statehood. This program was discussed in late February 1996 at joint meetings of the CIA and the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA). The day of 17 March and the "1 April peacekeeping joke" are integral parts in the implementation of this program.

The stepped-up activity of the former USSR president and politicians close to him should be seen in the same context. The organizers of the "big breakup," who currently live on their "well-deserved pensions," have now been ordered to be ready for "Red Alert." Just look at the eager and convulsive readiness with which politicians already familiar to the country from the era of fostering and stirring up the breakup of the USSR plunged headlong into Chechen peacemaking!

Bloodletting continues in Chechnya and people are still killed there. Dudayev and his henchmen were ordered to finish Russia off and to spurn any talks whatsoever. Meanwhile, yet more battalions of bloodthirsty mercenaries, trained on foreign territory, are being moved to Chechnya. The rebels are receiving state-of-the-art weaponry at their disposal. Basayev impudently grants television interviews, using space communications channels and equipment that is in service only with elite U.S. troops. The bets are placed on routing completely the demoralized Russian troops and escalating the peace initiative with a view to Russia's definitive breakup.

In part this demoralization has actually been achieved. After Yeltsin's statement people hewing to etatist views in the power agencies and the entire system of executive authority have experienced a political shock. Russia's enemies expect this shock to cause confusion and disarray. This may not happen! What is necessary is absolute calm and unity in the ranks of Russian etatists. Having thwarted the destructive adventure of 17 March, we must also repel the attempt at destroying our country by peaceloving provocations.

Neither ideological nor political differences should prevent all advocates of a strong Russian state from rallying together in order to rebuff the provocateurs. Provocations shall not pass!

Russia: Duma Military Expert Decries Chechnya Plan

MK0404132496 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 4 Apr 96 pp 1, 3

[Report by Aleksey Arbatov, State Duma deputy of the "Yabloko" faction, deputy chairman of the Defense Committee, under the "Peacekeeping" rubric with the general heading: "Peace Is Unlikely To Arrive Before the Election. The Settlement Program Has Serious Flaws"]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yeltsin has finally made public his program for ending the Chechen war. Russian citizens, particularly those who live in the midst of the goings-on, or who have relatives or friends there, waited for the announced hour with hope and, at the same time, doubts: Too many presidential obligations have remained mere words in recent years. The problem itself is so tragic and acute that one cannot help being afraid lest a word or a hint should damage the chances of resolving it.

And yet, sad as it might be, the presidential speech and his answers to the obliging questions of hand-picked journalists have so far left more room for doubt than for hope. The main, first impression is that the president either has no accurate information on the goings-on, that he cannot control the situation on the ground, or that he is deliberately misleading his compatriots in an attempt to calm public opinion. Which of these is worse is up to experts in political dialectics to decide.

What was particularly astonishing is his premise that following recent operations by the federal forces a turning point in the fortunes of the war has been achieved and that two-thirds of Chechen territory has been pacified. Meanwhile, the March offensive by the federal troops after the Dudayevites' attack on Groznyy on 6-8 March has achieved nothing except the escalation of destruction and losses on all sides.

The group of State Duma deputies that worked there in those days, which consisted of such politically incompatible members as Colonel Generals Eduard Vorobyev and Albert Makashov as well as the author of this article, had no differences on that score. The tactics of encircling and sealing off groups of rebels spotted around population centers, announcing that they can remain alive on condition they surrender their arms, and of "purging" the area by opening fire to kill, are ineffective given the rebels' mobility. The tactics also result in considerable destruction and the deaths of civilians during such operations. Also, because of the federal forces' shortage of manpower, as soon as darkness sets in, the federal forces find themselves almost everywhere effectively "under siege" and under fire, so they for their part open fire in return "at everything that moves." Movement in Groznyy and on Chechen roads is fraught with considerable danger, and checkpoints do not ensure the requisite control over communications," their [the deputies'] report emphasized. Furthermore, "the rebels' numbers grow, which testifies to the population's reaction to active operations by the federal forces."

Lieutenant General Lev Rokhlin, who is fully competent in such matters, for his part writes: "None of the latest operations was carried out successfully. As a rule.... in the end settlements were destroyed, civilians or hostages were killed, but bandit formations escaped from the federal forces yet again."

The tactics of signing peace agreements with the heads of local administrations is also self-delusion. The deputy groups pointed out that "the rebels hide their weapons and immediately turn into 'civilians'; a withdrawal of the federal forces from a village gives them the opportunity to become rebels once again; the deployment of federal forces in a population center sets off protests on the part of the civilian population and poses enhanced danger to the federal troops."

Maybe the president's optimistic assessment of the situation is simply a technique designed to stop combat operations without losing face and to start peace talks? Maybe it has finally dawned on him that the war has no prospects for the future and it cannot have a military solution despite the military command's assurances to the contrary?

But why did the president then contradict himself when he said in his answer to a journalist's question that the military conflict could not be prevented? In the meantime, he said not so long ago at a news conference that an agreement could have been reached in Chechnya without resorting to force. If now it is asserted that this was impossible (that is, everything was done correctly), on what achievements of the Chechen campaign is the peace settlement program based? It is evident that no "restoration of the constitutional order" or "disarming of illegal formations" has been achieved, let alone the "protection of citizens' rights." On the contrary, the March fighting has shown that one year after the seizure of Groznyy the situation has only become worse in all respects.

The ambiguity of the announced plans, too, leaves even more questions unanswered. The president, for one, announced a halt to combat operations except for "retaliation strikes at terrorists." But who has hitherto been targeted by such strikes if not terrorists — at least from the official point of view? What does the withdrawal of troops from "peaceful areas" mean if peaceful and military areas (including Groznyy) alternate there day in, day out? Furthermore, why should this be done before talks have begun — after all, a troop pullout is the federal authorities' main trump. It seems that in this case it is only a matter of a token redeployment of certain units.

Having left a few loopholes for the "power" agencies, the president is unlikely to be able to supervise the cessation of combat operations and the pullout of troops. The reason is that there is a crying lack of coordination even between the military, the Internal Affairs Ministry, and the other agencies in Chechnya, "even up to mutual accusations of treason," the deputies' report remarks. The president should have appointed an experienced and impartial commander (for instance, Boris Gromov or Eduard Vorobyev) to supervise and coordinate the cessation of fire and the disengagement of forces, to prevent the concentration of the opposition forces in our troops' rear, and to ensure the security of the withdrawing troops and those due to remain there.

As for the peace talks, Yeltsin's readiness to hold them with Dudayev is the only new and realistic element in Moscow's policy. Even here, however, there is no impression that his intentions are serious. It is clear that Dudayev will not go to Moscow — or Yeltsin, to Chechnya. But what serious talks can one discuss if no thought at all was given to the main thing: their mechanism? What kind of mechanism is it that either consists of a private person, the head of a neighboring CIS state, or, of all people, an Arab sheik, or that includes them all together, but which has zero authority and status in Moscow? What is needed here is not some middlemen or other, but the appointment of a plenipotentiary executor of the presidential plan, say, Arkadiy Volskiy, on whom an official status (at the level of deputy prime minister) should be conferred. He will also need a staff and subsequently a commission (including representatives of the opposition, pro-Moscow authorities, and, preferably, neutral neighboring republic and CIS countries) to verify compliance with the agreements and to investigate incidents of breaching them. So that the truce will not be derailed as was the case last time.

The main thing is to resolve currently the package of military questions or, simply speaking, to stop killing and destroying what has been left after a year of Chechen carnage. In order to achieve this goal we should first of all learn our lessons from the failures of last summer's peace process. Its lessons are not that talks are impossible or that the troops "were prevented from finishing off" the Dudayevites. They are that the talks should be conducted a hundred times more seriously and persistently, that the government should actually make them the top national priority, throwing its entire authority behind it, coordinating actions of individual agencies, and checking the resistance of the advocates of the chimera of "war until a victorious end." In the process, the authorities will need, as a breath of air, independent information channels and an extradepartmental mechanism to supervise the implementation of the decisions and agreements.

Only afterward can one proceed to hold political talks and to seek the creation of a legitimate government in Groznyy, stability in Chechnya, and the retention of the republic within Russia, having to one's credit a cease-fire, a phased withdrawal of troops, and the postwar restoration of Chechnya. All these three trumps together will guarantee that these efforts by Moscow will win the support of an overwhelming majority of the parties and the population of Russia, including Chechnya. The positions of the "intransigent" will then get weaker every day, thus opening up a road to a durable peace.

CIS: Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Uzbek Premiers Sign Cooperation Accords

LD0504174996 Tashkent Uzbekistan Television in Russian 1430 GMT 5 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] A meeting of the prime ministers of Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan was held at the Cabinet of Ministers of Uzbekistan today. Members of the official delegations from these countries participated in it. The implementation of decrees adopted by the [Uzbek, Kazakh, and Kyrgyz] heads of state in Dzhambul [southern Kazakhstan] on 15 December 1995 were discussed at the meeting.

After that, a total of 12 documents were signed. An agreement to make effective use of fuel, power, and water resources, to exploit gas deposits, to develop transport and communication ties, and to strengthen relations through the Central Asian [Development] Bank are among them. The documents were signed for the Uzbek side by Prime Minister Utkur Sultanov, for the Kazakh side by Prime Minister Akezhan Kazhegeldin, and for the Kyrgyz side by Prime Minister Apas Dzhumagulov.

[begin Kazhegeldin recording] I think that certain matters on the agenda of the meeting today are to some extent fairly detailed and specific, and one can say that we are carrying out our work. I don't know, various comments are possible, but I think that our integration union is working dynamically enough. [end recording] [passage omitted]

CIS: Minister for CIS Cooperation Views Regional Relations

LD0504151396 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1349 GMT 5 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 5 (Interfax) — Russian Minister for Cooperation with CIS Countries Valeriy Serov does not exclude the possibility of a referendum on a Russian-Belarusian confederation.

"It is difficult to talk now about the date, as the referendum depends entirely on Russia and Belarus fulfilling all the points of the Community agreement," Serov told a Friday press conference.

"It is dangerous to get too far ahead" on issues of integration, he said.

The agreements signed by Russia and Belarus, and with Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan "are in no way directed toward counterbalancing integration processes with the CIS as a whole," he said.

CIS countries will approve a program for 1996-1997 integration at an April 12 meeting in Moscow, Serov said.

Ties between Russia and Belarus, he said, "are the closest within the framework of the CIS."

Closer ties "do not hope to re-establish the USSR, which under the current conditions is simply impossible," he said.

Serov said talks on economic integration with Kiev are going at a "very active" pace, but "it is difficult to come to agreements with Ukraine on political issues because of her government's inconsistency."

CIS countries are supposed to pay off 1.9 trillion rubles of debt to Russia in 1996.

CIS: Security Chiefs Conclude Talks in Dushanbe

MK0504125396 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 5 Apr 96 p 3

[Report by Aleksey Nazarov under the general headline: "Conference of Heads of Special Services"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A conference of the heads of security organs and special services from 12 CIS countries has ended in Dushanbe. [date not given] The conference looked at the need for closer joint operation of the special services, as well as coordination of the war on organized crime, terrorism, illicit drug trade, and gunrunning. The conference participants were addressed by Tajikistan President Emomali Rakhmonov. He briefly outlined the political situation in Tajikistan, noting that, because of what civil war in the republic entails, and despite the overall stabilization in the sociopolitical condition, the situation remains difficult. The difficult situation along the Tajik-Afghan border, as well as in the contiguous state of Afghanistan, has created problems like the smuggling of drugs and arms. He noted that combating these phenomena is in accordance with the interests not only of Tajikistan, but also with those of the other Central Asian states, the Russian Federation, and the entire Commonwealth.

At the end of the conference, there was a press briefing with the Russian Federation Federal Security Service director, Mikhail Barsukov, summing up the results of their labor. He said that a major step was taken toward the joint work of the security organs and special services of the Commonwealth countries in combating such negative phenomena as rampant organized crime, drugs, and the weapons trade.

In Barsukov's words, all participants in the conference were one in their assessment of the situation that has taken shape in the ex-USSR. A desire was voiced by all the interested sides for closer cooperation and a better choice of the mechanisms of interaction. A decision was passed concerning the creation of a joint data bank of CIS-member states' special services. This is the first information step [as published] which will greatly facilitate the receipt of information from all Commonwealth states as well as the holding of joint operations against terrorism and illicit sales of drugs and arms. A decision was also made to create a standing coordination council and a technical committee. These bodies will temporarily function in Moscow out of the headquarters of the Federal Security Service. The Council of Economic Counterintelligence has been entrusted with coordinating the operation of these organizations.

Mikhail Barsukov described as extremely timely and important the results of the conference, stressing that criminal groups have long realized the need to unite, regardless of the countries where they are based. Therefore, he thinks that we should work more effectively in order to seriously oppose these groups.

Asked by Russian journalists about the forms of cooperation between the two neighbor states [Uzbekistan and Tajikistan], a spokesman of the Uzbek special services said that Uzbekistan has had such an accord with similar services of Tajikistan operating since 1992. According to him, Uzbek special services extradited to Tajikistan over that period 78 criminals from among members of the armed Islamic opposition based on the territory of Uzbekistan. He said such work continues and assumes closer and more specific forms.

Russia: Primakov Addresses International Forum on NATO Expansion

LD0504172896 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1514 GMT 5 Apr 96

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 5 (Interfax) — Moscow is prepared to compromise with NATO on the issue of its expansion if the alliance's military infrastructure does not move closer to the Russian border, Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov said.

Russia plans to submit a new security model for consideration of the next CIS summit, which would recognize NATO's role as an element of European security along with other institutions such as OSCE [Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe]. At the same time, Russia will play "a very big part" in this system, Primakov said. Moscow will establish special relations with NATO, if it does not expand, he said.

The NATO plans to expand eastward are a cause of irritation in the relations between the former cold war opponents, Primakov said in an address to the meeting of the Institute of the World Economy and International Relations scientific council devoted to the 75th birthday of Academician Nikolay Inozemtsev. He complained that NATO is unwilling to halt this process and is stepping up talks with the countries that wish to join it.

In particular, Primakov said, the addition of a second echelon that includes the Baltic countries and integration of Ukraine to NATO as well as the entry of the Visegrad group including Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia is on the NATO agenda.

"A geopolitical and a military political model is being imposed on us, in which NATO is expanding infinitely while Russia is kept at bay. This does not suit us at all," Primakov emphasized.

"There is no question of Russia hammering its fist on the table. Russia does not have a veto right, but we can and will protect our interests. Russia will think of adequate steps if, I repeat, IF our proposals do not lead to a solution," he said. Such proposals already exist, he noted.

According to Primakov, advocates of NATO expansion say that nuclear weapons will not be deployed in the countries that will join the alliance. "But if military infrastructures move closer to our territory, this reservation becomes purely tactical and can be jettisoned under certain circumstances," Primakov believes.

The advocates also maintain that the alliance is not aimed against Russia, Primakov said. "This is so, there is no direct aim at Russia," he admitted. He quoted U.S. President Bill Clinton as saying recently that Russian missiles' retargetting is the major success of the U.S. diplomacy.

"So, will they applause if we sharply increase the number of our missiles?" he asked rhetorically.

Moscow backs partnership with the West, without confrontation, but provided its own interests are not affected, Primakov said.

Equal partnership implies constant consultations, implementation of all accords and willingness to avoid contingencies, exchange of information and not putting one's partners before facts already happened, he said.

The West's negative attitude towards CIS integration is another factor of irritation in its relations with Russia, Primakov said.

"Some believe that we do not have objective reasons to integrate and that Russia is creating pre-conditions for conquering individual republics," he noted.

"Integration is advancing and will advance, while such speculations will not result in anything but more irritation in our relations," he underlined.

Globally, transition from a bipolar to multipolar system of international relations is today's main goal, Primakov said. However, this is complicated by "the inertia of the process and the "cold war" mentality," he added.

With the end of the "cold war," some circles are trying to create a monopolar rather than multipolar world, Primakov said. Some political scientists in the West speak of the need to preserve the enemy image. "It is being preserved by distorting Russia's policy, erasing the difference between Islamic fundamentalism and Islamic extremism and deliberately keeping some blacklisted countries in the risk zone," he said.

"Much is being done to make sure these countries will never see light at the end of the tunnel," he said.

Moscow should bear it in mind, while decision-making on its foreign policy and its implementation, Primakov stressed.

Despite all of its difficulties, including economic, Russia must act as a great power and pursue a multivector foreign policy, Primakov said.

"There can be no vacuum either in nature, or in politics," he said. "If we retreat from our positions, others will immediately take over." In addition, Russia should adapt to the new conditions and learn to protect its interests.

"Only a diversified foreign policy attributed to a great power can help," he said.

Primakov said his ministry will create a "narrow scientific council" to provide a basis for shaping up the principles of Russia's foreign policy.

"Foreign policy needs consensus in society even more than internal policy," Primakov said. In his opinion, such consensus is already taking shape, particularly on Russia's admission to the Council of Europe, proposed NATO enlargement and true partnership with the West.

Russia: Yeltsin: Integration Could Have Gone Deeper

LD0504135896 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1446 GMT 5 Apr 96

[By Andrey Shtorkh]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BELGOROD, April 5 (Itar-Tass) — Russia is not the only pace-setter in CIS integration processes, President Yeltsin admitted today.

"If everything had depended on Russia alone, integration would have gone much deeper by this time," Boris Yeltsin said in his address to the leadership of the Belgorod region today.

"We cannot and do not want to force anyone join a union. This is why we favour a voluntary gradual advance of the CIS member-states to meet each other half way. There is no alternative to this process," the Russian President said.

He recalled that the collapse of the union was painful for very many people and called for strengthening cooperation and restoring economic ties on a new basis to heal the wounds inflicted by the break up of the union.

Yeltsin said there was one condition for rapprochement: "Integration must be mutually beneficial." He said the agreement among Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, as well as the Russian-Belarusian agreement on community, were graphic examples of such an approach.

"In our Community with Belarus we made a clear-cut assessment of each country's strength and potential. It is too early to predict what will come out of deepening integration in, say, five years — a federation, a confederation or something else. It is not wise to make guesses ahead of time -- life will prompt what steps to take," the President said.

Russia: Moscow Expects UN Assistance in Human Rights Efforts

LD0404170596 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1459 GMT 4 Apr 96

[By Denis Perkin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 4 (Itar-Tass) — Russia hopes the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights will assist the efforts of the Russian leadership to improve the human rights record in Chechnya, the Russian Foreign Ministry said.

The ministry's spokesman Grigoriy Karasin told a briefing on Thursday that the cooperation from the commissioner is especially important in the light of the peace plan for Chechnya proposed by President Boris Yeltsin.

Karasin said a special envoy of the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR), Fausto Pocar, had ended his visit to Moscow last Saturday.

Meetings have been arranged for Pocar in the Russian Security Council, Ministry for Nationalities and Federal Relations, Prosecutor's Office, Constitutional Court and Foreign Ministry, Karasin said.

He said the UNHCHR envoy had been "thoroughly and frankly informed about the history and origins of the armed conflict and the present state of affairs in Chechnya and around it."

New prospects of Russia's relations with the UNHCHR are in sight, he added.

The Russian side told Pocar that "the format for our further relations with the High Commissioner will be set with account for the fact that the report of the U.N. Secretary-General on the situation in Chechnya, drafted by the U.N. Centre for Human Rights and submitted to the 52nd session of the Commission on Human Rights, does not adequately reflect the situation in the region."

In particular, Karasin said, the report is reticent about the wrecking of earlier peace accords by Dudayev's supporters and their embarking on terrorism.

The report does not say much of the view of the Russian side and scarcely mentions the active dialogue between Russia and the UNHCHR on the Chechnya problem, Karasin said.

"We will certainly make account of all this in terms of usefulness of the development of our relations with the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights," he said.

Russia: Defense Expert Opposes START II Ratification

MM0504155096 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 5 Apr 96 p 5

[Article by Anton Surikov of Institute of Defense Studies under the "Polemics" rubric: "START II: Ratification Is Inadvisable. Russia Needs New Missile Instead of Treaty"]

[FBIS Translated Text] During 1995 the problem of the ratification of the START II Treaty was relegated to the back burner first by the conflict in Chechnya and then by the Duma elections. Among the noteworthy events associated with the treaty you can mention just the parliamentary hearings of fall 1995 and the statements by Grachev and Shumeyko, which effectively linked the issue of START II ratification by the Federal Assembly with the question of NATO expansion.

In early 1996, however, the situation changed: The U.S. Senate ratified the treaty. The issue of the Russian Federal Assembly's ratifying the treaty in April-May 1996 appeared on the agenda. Representatives of the executive, in particular, President Yeltsin and Foreign Minister Primakov clearly advocated the earliest possible ratification of START II. The treaty's supporters in parliament took a more cautious line. Vladimir Lukin, chairman of the Committee for International Affairs, called for the resolution of the treaty issue to be postponed until the presidential elections. Then, according to him, it will be possible to avoid the election campaign's affecting the outcome. The position espoused by State Duma Speaker Gennadiy Seleznev — as can be seen from his somewhat contradictory statements — most probably is that the treaty should be discussed in detail by the parliament's committees. The Committee for Geopolitical Issues was the first to hold such hearings. Most of its members inclined to the view that it is inadvisable to ratify the START II treaty in its current form.

The main argument put forward by the opponents of START II is that, given Russia's current military weakness and its inability to maintain parity with a likely enemy in the sphere of conventional arms, emphasis must be placed on cheaper nuclear weapons. When it is a question of deterring the United States and NATO and possibly even China in the future, nuclear arms provide the only real means today of deterring the threat of both nuclear and nonnuclear attack.

In the USSR's day that was not the case. On the contrary for a long time the United States and NATO hewed to the strategy of using nuclear deterrence to counter the threat of nonnuclear attack from the USSR and its Warsaw Pact allies against the bloc's forces in Central Europe. But the situation has changed dramatically since Soviet times. Today's Russian Federation is considerably weaker than the Soviet Union of the eighties. For purely economic reasons it cannot afford to maintain equilibrium with its potential enemies in the nonnuclear sphere. After all, NATO will have four-fold superiority over us in conventional arms in Europe once the countries of Eastern Europe have joined the alliance. That is why the "Main Principles of Russian Federation Military Doctrine" adopted in 1993 enshrined the idea that Russia does not preclude the idea of being the first to use nuclear weapons in the event of external aggression against it and its allies under the Tashkent agreement.

In summer 1991 the USSR and U.S. presidents signed the START I Treaty, ratified by the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet in fall 1992. After a long delay this treaty came into force in December 1994 and is due to operate through the year 2009. I should point out that START I was disadvantageous for the USSR. While agreeing to halve the number of our "heavy" SS-18 missiles, we received little in return. The SS-18's "bargaining potential" was not utilized. But, most importantly, the entire train of events that followed the conclusion of the treaty undermined its spirit. After all, START I, drafted in the eighties, was based on the situation existing in the country and the world at the time. The USSR and the Warsaw Pact Organization existed at the time. You would have thought that the Helsinki agreements of 1975 provided an international guarantee of the stability of Europe's borders. No one at the time could have imagined the breakup of the Soviet Union and the world balance of forces shifting dramatically in favor of the United States and NATO.

Nevertheless most experts right now do not question the START I Treaty. But START II is another matter. The treaty does not have a major effect on the prospects for the development of the sea-based (naval strategic nuclear forces) and air-based (air-based strategic nuclear forces) components of the Strategic Nuclear Forces. It affects the Strategic Missile Forces [SMF] considerably more. Under START II, which envisages the elimination of MIRVed ICBM's, in 2003 the SMF are entitled to possess around 1,000-1,200 single-warhead ICBM's. There are now less than 350 mobile single-warhead SS-25's in service, which will over the next few years have to be replaced with "Topol-M" ICBM's because they will have come to the end of their warranted service life. The treaty also leaves Russia with 105 ICBM's with IN-19 multiple reentry vehicles [MRV's], which are to be "downgraded [razgruzka]" to a single warhead. But in this case, despite the agreement for Ukraine to acquire by "barter" an additional 130 SS-19 delivery vehicles, there are problems involved in extending the service life of these missile systems. What is more, START II makes it possible to site 90 "Topol-M" single-warhead missiles in converted "heavy" SS-18 ICBM launch silos.

In order to meet the START II quota for the number of single-warhead missiles and thus ensure approximate numerical parity with the United States in strategic offensive arms Russia must by the year 2003 form an additional 10-15 divisions of mobile ICBM's with around 500-600 "Topol-M" missiles, that is, more than double the number of mobile single-warhead ICBM's. Another possible solution is to deploy the same number of additional single-warhead missiles in new silos. However, even given priority funding it is extremely hard for the SMF to do this within such a short period for purely economic reasons.

By and large its critics point out that the START II Treaty is a fairly paradoxical document. It requires the accelerated destruction by the year 2003 of over 200 Russian SS-18 and SS-24 ICBM's with MRV's, some of which could remain in service for another few years, until the year 2007-2009. At the same time in order to maintain quantitative equality with the United States a few hundred additional single-warhead missiles should be deployed, possibly in new launch silos, whereas some of the old launch silos are to be destroyed under the terms of the treaty. Admittedly, the Americans are ready to fund some of the work of weapons destruction within the framework of the Nunn-Lugar program. However, naturally enough, they will never fund the additional deployment of "Topol-M's."

It is also typical that the United States prefers to take a quite different route from Russia from START I to START II. Only 50 MX missiles, four "Ohio" PRK's [?Submarine Missile Complexes], and 28 heavy bombers with cruise missiles are to be destroyed. All in all it is planned to carry out the cuts by "unloading" [razgruzka] "Trident" and "Minutemen-3" missiles, that is, by removing their warhead section for storage in special storage facilities. At any moment these warheads, which the Americans are flatly refusing to destroy, could be promptly returned to their missiles. As a result, mindful of the "potential for rapid rearming [potentsial bystroy dogruzki]" the United States will have 1,000-1,200 more warheads than the Russian Federation. Meanwhile the promises made by the United States to destroy the live stages [boyevyye stupeni] of the "Minutemen-3" ICBM's do not solve the problem either since, first, they do not affect those on "Trident" submarine-launched ballistic missiles [SLBM's] and, second, this is a measure that can be "reversed" within three to five months. It is, after all, far easier and cheaper to produce live stages, fit them with the stored warheads, and deploy all this on the ICBM's in the launch silos than to produce nuclear charges for the warheads.

Another important argument used by the opponents of START II is the link between START II and compliance with the ABM Treaty. At present, despite the stormy Congressional debates, the Americans have no plans to withdraw from the treaty and the 1974 protocol thereto. These debates were initiated by newly-elected Republican senators — "a bunch of Neanderthals," as Vladimir Lukin called them.

The fiasco of their attack on the ABM Treaty is being presented as a great achievement for the U.S. Administration. But the point is that the United States does not currently stand to gain from the abrogation of the treaty. The Americans have now focused their efforts on ABM defense research and development. It does not necessitate patent violations of the treaty over the next few years, and is due to be complete by the year 2003 when it is planned to make the decision to denounce the ABM Treaty and deploy a strategic ABM defense system of U.S. territory within three to five years. By that time the START II Treaty process will have become irreversible and it will no longer be possible to recreate the grouping of "heavy" SS-18 ICBM's.

Consequently, the solution is to refuse to ratify START II. Refusing to ratify the treaty raises in turn the problem of maintaining a grouping of ICBM's with MRV's for the period post-2003. Analysis shows that this problem can be resolved. Thus, a sea-based SS-N-20 missile fitted with 10 light-class warheads can be sited in the launch silos of the MRVed ICBM's being taken out of service. According to the specialists, there would be negligible work involved in converting this SLBM for installation in a launch silo. Another option is this: an 80-120-tonne liquid-fuel missile fitted with 10 medium-class warheads, which could be developed at Reutov or Miass three to five years after the appropriate decision has been adopted. Over the next five years a group of around 300 such ICBM's could be deployed in existing launch silos. If the United States withdraws from the ABM Treaty we could denounce START I and subsequently build up a group of new MRVed ICBM's by 50-70 units per year.

The argument put forward by supporters of START II that the development of a new MRVed Russian ICBM is costly seems bankrupt. The cost of this project would be quite moderate. The research and development work, production, and deployment of 300 such ICBM's would be equivalent to the cost of producing (minus combat equipment) an additional 250-300 mobile "Topol-M" single-warhead missiles. It would annually amount to less — by almost two orders of magnitude than the amount that it is planned to spend, according to the president's edict, on the "restoration" of Chechnya in 1996 alone. At any rate the project for a new MRVed ICBM with finished combat equipment would be roughly half the cost of deploying an additional 500 "Topol-M" ICBM's within the same period, whether they be mobile or installed in new launch silos, as mentioned above.

Thus, in the current situation it is inadvisable to ratify the START II Treaty without resolving the problem of the United States' superiority in terms of "redeployment potential [vozvratnyy potentsial]" and without reliable guarantees of the Americans' observance post-2003 of the 1972 ABM Treaty and the 1974 Protocol. At the same time I can say with certainty that the United States will not accommodate us on these issues. Therefore it is urgently necessary to launch research and development work to create a new MRVed ICBM at Russia's science and production base.

Russia: Surikov START Ratification Attack Rejected

MM0504160596 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 5 Apr 96 p 5

[Article by Aleksandr Akulov under the "Polemics" rubric: "Feed Defense Industry Workers. This will Cost Less Than New Nuclear Missile Race"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The plethora of abbreviations (MSYaS [naval strategic nuclear forces], ASYaS [air-based strategic nuclear forces], and ShPU [launch silo]) and figures, which are apparently supposed to convince people of the maximum factual accuracy of the author's arguments, should in no way obscure his main virtue. Namely, the exceptionally powerful imagination possessed by most opponents of the START II Treaty. With its help they can feel as though they are the inhabitants of a state which is completely different from the one in which other Russians, who are not party to the secrets of big strategy, live. Of course, this nonexistent country has a stable economy. Its entrepreneurs gladly pay taxes, as a result of which the state budget is balanced. Its inhabitants (including military personnel) have never heard of delays in paying wages. True, this country has a serious problem. It is the threat from "potential enemies." The United States is dreaming of carrying out a nuclear attack on Russia.

I am well aware that in military planning political declarations are not taken into account. Account is taken only of those military assets possessed by the sides. According to this logic Russia should have exactly the same number of warheads as the United States. But the same planning also presupposes an analysis of the probability of potential threats. This planning requires that account be taken of the resources which could be used in order to counter these threats.

It seems to me that to Russia, which is located literally at the center of a huge zone of instability, to Russia, which is having to fight separatism by means of force, the threat of a nuclear attack is not of the first order. From this viewpoint the manufacture and purchase of support helicopters and military transport aircraft, which can make Russian troops mobile, is much more important than the attempt to get hold of exactly the same number of missiles as the United States has. Let us not forget that the country cannot now do both simultaneously.

But let us assume that the author is right. In that case, if the United States is seriously considered to be a potential enemy, we ought to discuss honestly those scenarios according to which Washington could decide on a nuclear strike or blackmail. I do not think that such scenarios will have anything in common with foreign policy reality. But even if such a scenario can be envisaged (and it will be by certain analysts), we ought to determine how many nuclear weapons Russia must have in order to guarantee a reliable deterrent.

After all, if an antiballistic-missile [ABM] system were deployed by the United States, those planning it believe that it will be able to intercept a maximum of 20-30 missiles. But if the authors of the pessimistic scenarios are right and Russia is unable to reach all the ceilings set under the START II Treaty, it will still have hundreds of missiles. It is quite clear that, if just one of them were to beat the ABM system, for the United States it would mean the same unacceptable losses which have previously been estimated to be millions of people killed and hundreds of cities burnt down. This is precisely what the main deterrent factor will be.

Furthermore, the time for START II's critics runs out in 2003. They are firmly convinced that the Americans will definitely take advantage of the moment when Russia destroys the MIRVed intercontinental ballistic missiles [ICBM's] which are so dear to its heart (I will observe parenthetically that other experts consider these very weapons to be the most provocative) and when it has not had time to reach all the ceilings. But we have the chance to stockpile nuclear assets in subsequent years. At the same time as the Americans will not do that within the START II framework. It turns out that even according to the worst-case scenarios (the United States is waiting for Russian "heavy" missiles to be destroyed and then deploys its ABM defense) Russia will retain a reliable deterrent potential.

Now let us see what will happen if Russia refuses to implement START II. In this case far from just the

Washington "Neanderthals" but also entirely reasonable people in the United States will be given grounds to doubt Moscow's intentions. The author fails to mention that the United States has extremely broad scope to stockpile and improve its nuclear potential within the START I Treaty. Let me just remind you of the possibility of manufacturing a good 100 B-2 strategic bombers. And they will be equipped with the cruise missiles which Washington previously relinquished voluntarily. An ABM system, and not just for a theater of military operations but for an entire territory, will certainly be created. Thus, strategic parity, about the preservation of which the START II Treaty's opponents care so much, will be upset.

How could Russia counter this? The author asserts that MIRVed ICBM's which have outlived their warranted service life could be retained in combat positions. True, he forgets to mention that according to data from the Strategic Missile Forces command, as of today such missiles make up 50 percent of the land-based nuclear arsenal. Let us also leave to the author's conscience his certainty that ICBM's which have outlived their warranted service life are more reliable than a submarine which has similarly outlived its warranty period. Incidentally, here it should be borne in mind that responsibility for extending the service life and warranty maintenance of such systems in the USSR rested with the manufacturing plants. But ICBM's (unlike submarines) were produced in Ukraine. The fact that we are now forced to prolong the service life of missiles, hoping to replace them with our own single-warhead system, is a harsh necessity. But to do this in the future only in order to get involved in a pointless race with the United States is sheer madness.

The author too realizes this. He needs the retention of missiles which have outlived their warranty period only for one thing: In order to build and deploy a new Russian MIRVed ICBM. This is the main idea for the sake of which the article was actually written. Here it is proposed that we develop a new missile and then develop new production capacity to replace the obsolete ones in Ukraine. That is, that we recreate the very powerful military-industrial complex with its unique test benches, testing equipment, and so forth. This, it turns out, is cheaper than simply producing the "Topol-M" system at existing plants. All we have to do is see how much the state is now allocating (it is unlikely to be able to allocate more) for defense research and development in order to understand the feasibility of such proposals. Let me observe that at the moment there is not enough money even to produce the missiles which have already been developed.

I am well aware that only desperation can force serious people to come up with proposals to start a nuclear missile arms race. The proposal to refuse to ratify the START II Treaty means precisely this. The reasons for this desperation are well known: Russia has been left to the whim of fate and has doomed the missile "firms" which forged this might to a half-starved existence. The same might which, like it or not, is now the only attribute that a great power has left. But if an attempt is made to implement these proposals we could soon be deprived of even this attribute. Because instead of being concentrated, resources will inevitably be dispersed. This is not to mention that we will bar our own way toward really becoming a great power for a long time if not forever. It is better to pay wages regularly to starving defense industry workers. It will be cheaper.

Russia: ZAVTRA Insists Yeltsin-Clinton Transcript Authentic

MK0604122596 Moscow ZAVTRA in Russian No. 14, Apr 96 (signed to press 2 Apr 1996) p 1

[Unattributed report by "'Den' security service": "B.Ye.N.'s Campaign Oiled With Bill's Dollars. Regarding ZAVTRA's Publication of the Text of a Yeltsin-Clinton Telephone Conversation"]

[FBIS Translated Text] When we opted to publish the English-language version of Yeltsin's conversation with Clinton, we had doubts as to whether we might be publishing a falsehood. Could this tape turn out to be the invention of a mischievous patriot or disinformation by a Russian special service attempting to stir up the public consciousness? Particularly so since there was something in it with which to stir things up: The conversation indicates Yeltsin's complete moral, political, and material dependence on Clinton, whom the Russian president begs to assist him in his election campaign and to help him obtain the IMF's $10 billion loan for campaign purposes. In return Yeltsin promises to ratify the START II Treaty, which is harmful to Russia. As we see, the loan has been obtained. It is from it that, smothering people's disgruntlement, sums of money are hastily being sent to the regions to repay debts; in the meantime, Yeltsin is pressing the Duma to ratify START II. Furthermore, the Russian Foreign Ministry's nervous reaction to our publication makes it clear that the article is the original, not a falsehood. According to IZVESTIYA, an official investigation has been launched at the Foreign Ministry in connection with our publication in order to find the source of the leak. This again proves the authenticity of the published transcript. Moreover, Mr. Pickering, U.S. ambassador to Russia, was urgently summoned to the Foreign Ministry, where a representation was made to him with regard to the "leak" of confidential information from U.S. sources. Therefore, the English-language version of the conversation is the original, and the "source" who leaked it is an American from the Department of State, the CIA, or the Defense Intelligence Agency interested in weakening Clinton, who, like Yeltsin, is seeking reelection. We want once again to draw domestic and foreign journalists' attention to the global conspiracy of the two presidents, whose mechanism and principles are indistinguishable from a bargain between two rough and unscrupulous dealers selling out their peoples' interests.

Russia: Moscow Calm Over Chinese-Russian Border Group Resignation

LD0504173796 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1514 GMT 5 Apr 96

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Apr 5 (Interfax) — Moscow "sees no tragedy" in the fact that Maj. Gen. Valeriy Rozov quit the group that deals with the demarcation of the eastern part of the Russian-Chinese border, a high-ranking Russian Foreign Ministry official who asked not to be named told Interfax Friday.

As has already been reported, Rozov announced his resignation at a news conference in Vladivostok Friday, claiming that he "cannot participate in work which will lead to tearing land away from Russia in favor of China."

Rozov's words must be regarded as his personal opinion which "differs from the position of the Russian leadership," the diplomat reported.

In this context, the source recalled that Russian President Boris Yeltsin issued an order in late February on measures to complete the demarcation of the eastern part of the Russian-Chinese border.

The 1991 and 1994 agreements on the eastern and western parts of the border with China resolved one of the major problems which complicated relations between the two neighboring countries for many years, said the diplomat.

He recalled that both agreements have already been ratified by Russia and China.

The diplomat also said that Rozov did not head the demarcation group, as was reported by media, but was an expert in the group.

Russia: Foreign Ministry Official of Resignation of Border Expert

LD0604093196 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 0340 GMT 6 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] General Rozov, an expert on the Russian- Chinese border demarcation commission representing Maritime Territory, has announced his decision to resign. This was reported by an ITAR-TASS correspondent from Vladivostok. The general told representatives of the Maritime Territory administration and correspondents that he is categorically opposed to the transfer to China of areas of land as a result of the border demarcation process. We contacted the Russian Foreign Ministry's Information and Press Department and this is what we were told by Mikhail Demurin, the department's first deputy chief:

[Begin Demurin recording] Speaking about the work of demarcating the Russian-Chinese border, one must obviously start from its basis in international law, and that is the 1991 border agreement. In preparing that agreement the entire set of factors and arguments was taken into account. The agreement was signed and must be implemented. Under the agreement, the joint Russian-Chinese demarcation commission was set up. The Russian side of the commission is made up of 15 persons and there are also a number of advisers and experts working on it. Maj. Gen. Rozov was one such expert. The Russian delegation of course does not operate on the basis of, as it were, its own directives invented on the spot, but it works in strict accordance with the instructions of the Russian Government and the order of the president of the Russian Federation, dated 21 February 1996. This also applies to areas of land in Ussuriysk and Khasan districts in Maritime Territory.

By the president's order, the Russian delegation is to complete the demarcation in strict accordance with the 1991 agreement. Work has been under way and proceeding normally along the entire length of the 4,300 km border. A working meeting of the joint Russian-Chinese demarcation commission was held in Moscow recently. It did some successful work and confirmed the demarcation documents on where the border should run for around a further 1,000 km. [end recording]

In addition to what Aleksandr Demurin said, I will add what appears to me to be a detail of substance. The agreement which is now opposed by General Rozov was signed by the former Soviet Union and China. Its aim is to rid Soviet-Chinese relations of the issue of disputed border territories which had arisen as a result of natural changes in the terrain over a period of more than 100 years since it had last been marked. In some border areas changes were made favoring the USSR, and in some others favoring China. Altogether, areas transferred to China amount to 1,500 hectares. At the time, the agreement did not give rise to any protest. In 1991, too, it was ratified by the RSFSR Supreme Soviet. After the Union broke up, the agreement came under sharp criticism, above all by the Maritime Territory's leadership. Nor has there been any let-up at the present time in the demands for a revision of the agreement. Without casting doubt on the motives for these demands, I would like to say that, by becoming the successor of the Soviet Union, Russia is obliged to fulfil the agreements it signed. Moves like those now resorted to by General Rozov do not enhance Russia's authority. The general's statement has already attracted the attention of foreign news agencies, which are very closely following not only Russian-Chinese relations, but also relations between the center and the regions in Russia. It is obviously better not to discuss the first issue at news conferences. There is, after all, a reason for the Foreign Ministry being vested with the function of interdepartmental coordinator of Russia's foreign policy.

Russia: Rozov on Resignation from Border Demarcation Commission

LD0604171096 Moscow NTV in Russian
1800 GMT 5 Apr 96

[From the "Segodnya" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Announcer Tatyana Mitkova] Now for the scandal on the Russo-Chinese border. Border Guards General Valeriy Rozov, who served on the border demarcation commission right up to the very last day, summoned journalists to announce his resignation today. The reason for the conflict was President Yeltsin's instruction to complete demarcation of the border with China strictly in accordance with the Russo-Chinese agreement. Correspondents at NTV Television's Far East bureau have the details.

[Begin recording] [Unidentified correspondent, over video of Rozov addressing journalists] Valeriy Rozov, the advisor to the Russian delegation at the negotiations on demarcating the Russo-Chinese border, resigned today. He explained that he did not wish to be any part of handing over to China 1,500 hectares of land in Maritime Territory. Rozov is convinced that this will weaken Russia's strategic and economic position in the east.

[Rozov, to journalists] Someone may perhaps come who will decide otherwise, but I personally gave my word three years ago that I would not erect the 12 border posts that are to stand on this territory.

[Correspondent, over video of border region, posts] Border Guards Major General Valeriy Rozov was among those who started the demarcation. This process is now nearing completion. There are nine border posts still to be erected on the territory of the Maritime Territory. The president has signed a special instruction on the need to complete the demarcation on time. Valeriy Rozov believes the presidential administration has not been given convincing arguments against this.

[Rozov] There is no explanation for the handing over of these two sectors, none at all. It is said to be good will on the part of somebody. Who had legislative permission for such an act of good will?

[Correspondent] General Rozov does not think there is any group of Moscow politicians and diplomats who are lobbying for China's interests in the demarcation issue. Officials, he said, are afraid to admit the mistakes committed during the drawing up and ratification of the 1991 Russo-Chinese Border Agreement.

In the Maritime Territory, General Rozov's resignation is regarded as sudden but not unexpected. He has long been saying that he backs the position of Governor Yevgeniy Nazdratenko, who has the reputation of being a fervent champion of Russian lands in Maritime Territory. It is known that, as a member of the official delegation during Boris Yeltsin's visit to China, Maritime Territory Governor Yevgeniy Nazdratenko plans to organize the latest round of his fight for the disputed lands.

Russia: State Duma Chairman on Ties With Baltic States

LD0504162096 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1428 GMT 5 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] VILNIUS, April 5 (Interfax) — Communist Gennady Seleznev, chairman of the State Duma, Russia's lower house of parliament, said on Friday the future of Russia's relations with Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia was linked to their bid for membership in NATO.

"One cannot expect to have good relations with Russia and ignore its interests at the same time, especially its security interests," Seleznev told Vilnius's Russian-language newspaper Ekho Litvy (Echo of Lithuania).

"We have more than once openly said what it would mean for Russia if NATO came close to its borders. And we as openly say that such a prospect will force us to take measures to ensure our security," Seleznev said.

Russia "consistently stands for strengthening good-neighborly and equal relations with Lithuania," a policy based on the principle that "there simply are no unsolvable problems between us," Seleznev said.

Passing on to Russia's relations with Latvia, he said "the main obstacle to the development of wide-scale cooperation is the practice of discrimination against Russians that continues to exist in Latvia."

Russia's relations with Estonia are "unsatisfactory" because of "the consistently anti-Russian course of Tallinn, mass-scale violations of human rights and the oppression of Orthodox believers," he said.

"Under such circumstances the Russian Federation must, and I'm sure will, defend its interests more resolutely, making use of the entire arsenal of political and economic measures," he warned.

Russia: Zhirinovskiy Warns Turkey, Azerbaijan Over Combat Actions

LD0604183196 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1538 GMT 6 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text]c MOSCOW, April 6 (Interfax) — The press service of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR) parliamentary faction circulated a statement Saturday in connection with Russian media reports alleging that Chechen separatists' planes which bombed Chechen villages were based in Turkey or Azerbaijan.

"A tragedy may occur in Azerbaijan and Turkey at any time if these countries fail to end combat actions against Russia," LDPR leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy said in the statement.

"Turkey, which is a NATO member state, should remember that it has a huge and dangerous problem concerning Kurds, and that Russia could develop this problem into a large-scale war anytime," Zhirinovskiy said.

Azerbaijan, which "sends from its aerodromes planes to bomb Russia," "should not forget that Armenians did not seize Baku only due to Russia's intervention, and that the issue of this seizure has not so far been removed," he said.

Many sources "confirm that the Chechen villages which have signed peace accords with the federal troops were bombed not by federal air power, not by Russian pilots," Zhirinovskiy said.

"These planes were piloted by citizens of foreign countries linked with international special services," Zhirinovskiy said.

Political Issues

Russia: Yeltsin Delivers Speech at Public Support Congress

LD0604171496 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1505 GMT 6 Apr 96

[Speech by Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin at Congress of the All-Russian Movement of Public Support in Moscow on 6 April — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] Dear friends and allies, in the first place I want to thank you and many, many of my fellow countrymen, for the support for my activities as president.

I feel this support at most crucial times for Russia. I was aware of this support when I was grappling with the difficult issue of whether to take part in the current elections.

I am grateful to the millions of our citizens who appended their signatures in favor of putting my candidacy forward. Let me say honestly that your support, your energy are my strength and that is why I firmly believe in our common victory, a victory for free Russia.

Today I am again meeting you, who are so dear to me, and I see many familiar faces. It is always a big day for me to find myself in such a large company of companions-in-arms and allies.

I am happy again to see those with whom, at the nation's behest, we started the grand cause of Russia's revival. I will intentionally not be unveiling my election program for you today. In keeping with the tactics of the election campaign, it will be presented somewhat later, so that my opponents can wait.

I am not alone here today, for my entire family, 10 people, my children, my grandchildren are behind me. I want the whole of Russia to listen to what I have to say. I have nothing to hide.

The uppermost law in our family and in our country is the law of truth. This law demands that everything must be aired honestly, successes and failures alike. [applause]

How fast the years fly — it seems as if it were only yesterday that Russia was waking up from its long and lethargic slumber. People have begun openly to air their views.

So many interesting and bright personalities appeared at that time. Only five years have passed but in actual fact a whole era has become history. The whole of Russian society has changed. We have stopped seeing the world as red and white. It appeared to us to be diverse, rich, and colorful. The monopoly of one party, censorship, and party diktat have disappeared without trace, they have sunk into oblivion. Human rights and freedoms have stopped being just empty words. Fundamental changes have taken place in the state structure. Free elections of representative bodies, the president and heads of the regions and cities have become an integral part of our life. These are conditions of real control of society over authorities.

The legislative, executive, and judicial branches of power are independent in Russia. They have already acquired experience and are moving further away from confrontation. The nationwide constitution which has been adopted ensures the stability of the state. The mechanism of combining the interests of the center and the regions for the sake of the common good is becoming more and more efficient. Economic relations have fundamentally changed. The system which contradicted the economic experience of the whole mankind has been replaced by market economy which has proved its efficiency in all the countries around the world.

Russia is open to the world community. It has been admitted to the Council of Europe. The ghost of nuclear catastrophe has been buried under the debris of the iron curtain.

And after all that some presidential candidates claim that reforms have not even started yet. In their pursuit of gaining political points they don't even notice that they are humiliating the whole nation, the whole of Russia.

Do you remember where we started at the end of 1991? An empty treasury, empty shelves in the shops, a sharp drop in production, the ruble which nobody wanted. It was then that all the paralysis of power which had been ruling the country for seven decades was demonstrated in full.

We have inherited the desire of a certain part of the population to live at someone else's expense, to be paid rather than to earn. Only bold steps by the Russian leadership, which at the start of 1992 began decisive economic transformations, enabled us to prevent a catastrophe. We prevented the disintegration of Russia and laid the foundation of a law-based democratic state.

The profound changes that Russia underwent in the last five years are a result of the enormous will-power and great efforts of our compatriots. A very wide, virtually all-people's movement has brought about changes in Russia. You, my dear friends, have played an important part in this. We should value our achievements. It was impossible, of course, to complete in this short period of time the profound and large-scale transformations which were started five years ago. There was not enough time to overcome everything that was accumulated for many decades.

The reforms have revealed the unsightly vices of our former life, shocking many people. Some mistook consequences for causes and blamed the innocent. We did not manage to avoid mistakes either.

We underestimated the anti-reform forces' resistance to changes.

Right from the very start we underestimated the importance of maintaining a constant dialogue with our citizens. That is why not everyone came to understand the essence of the transformations that have been under way, or else their essence was not grasped right away. Not everyone was given the opportunity of availing themselves of the results of the reforms, with the effect that a proportion of the population has rejected them.

That is why the coming presidential elections represent a difficult and responsible test of free Russia's maturity. That is why the presidential elections are a serious test for us all, for those who started the country's transformations.

Currently dozens of candidates representing parties of various persuasions are laying claims to the presidency. I am at times reproached for never having joined a democratic party or a democratic movement, or for not having organized my own presidential party, as I planned to.

The passage of time and the experience gathered convinced me that it is still too early. Let me put it this way: our society is not homogeneous. Even the most insignificant of its minorities has a right to express and defend its interests, including through its own parties and movements and the president must treat everyone equally. It is the president's destiny to search for and to find a balance of these interests and aspirations.

I cannot be a member of any party while political struggle is tearing our society asunder. I regard its consolidation as my task. I have had and continue to have this position and will not budge from it, because this is the main thing for me.

We are united by two simple truths — the first one is that the future belongs only to a free and democratic Russia.

Second. We must continue the great cause of reforms and bring it through to a practical result, to a successful completion.

Frankly, I am not satisfied with what I have done during my presidency. Almost half of the population is poor and 10 percent lives very well. Parasitically acquired capital is beginning to emerge. National wealth is being divided instead of growing further. Because of the political instability in the country a lot of capital is fleeing abroad. I am telling you, citizens of the Russian Federation, that we need to correct our course a bit and we should be doing this together. The time has come for this: a correction - not a change, but some adjustments to the course. The people must play the main role in the reforms.

We do not need the reforms just for their own sake. The large amount of painstaking work which has been under way for five years now and will be continued has its clear goals. They are the wellbeing of the individual and the wellbeing of the family. This is the main thing. [applause] A free society and a just state. A prosperous Russia. [applause] It isn't for their own sake that a reduction of inflation, the currency corridor, pluralism, and so on, should be the aims of our policy. The main goal is the individual, his everyday concerns, his family, his spiritual composure, in the end. This is what you and I must work together for.

Do I need to speak of how the family has suffered from the burdens of the transitional period? This is precisely where all of today's difficulties and problems come down to, first of all the economic ones. Ask a man's wife what inflation is and she will explain it to you as well as any economist.

I believe that slower price rises are not only an economic goal but also a factor in strengthening the family. Do I need to explain the blow dealt to the family by delays in paying wages? Most people in Russia live from one pay packet to the next. It is the family that suffers when medical care is bad, for adults and children. From poor housing. From street crime. And plenty of other problems. In a country such as Russia, every family wishing to have land can and shall have it. Given the huge size of Russia's territory, the state's most important social goal is to remove the obstacles to relatives living in different parts of the country keeping in touch. Transport and communications should once again become accessible to the people. Help for the Russian family to stand firmly on its own two feet represents the backbone of all policy for the next four years. [applause]

It is a very difficult target to achieve, but I am standing for election and will win so that I can do it. People of the older generation need no less attention. In the midst of the great business of state, we have no right to forget their problems. I have just returned from the Belgorod region, after being there for two days, and the main concern put to me in the crowds, the thousands of people

I met there - the main concern of the elderly there was this: small pensions. We cannot live on 200,000 rubles.

And indeed one can't survive on 200,000 rubles. I made an appeal to some directors: you, directors, your enterprises are performing fine, why can't you add 100,000 or 200,000 rubles to your pensioner's basic pensions? And, you know, the directors immediately, on the same day, within the hour, signed relevant instructions and increased the pensions of their pensioners. Other people in Russia can follow suit while the state is short of finances. [applause]

I think that in the near future, in the next few months we must certainly increase at least the minimum pensions because indeed 200,000 rubles is a shame for Russia. And I will do that by decree. [applause]

I look at the prospects of the Russian economy with optimism. I have set myself the objective of completing the economic reform successfully in the next few years. And after that a natural economic development will get under way. Already by the end of this year we will ensure that price rises are not more than one percent per month and inflation stops eating away the wellbeing of people. In two or three years we will have an economy with a growth in the volume of production of not less than five percent per year, permanently year after year. The investment flow will determine a structural turn toward industries with advanced technologies.

Of course, at present foreign investments have unfortunately been slowed down. And it is clear why. They are waiting for June, they are waiting for the elections. And only after the elections there will be either a flow of foreign investments or not even a brook. We must be fully aware of that.

A tax reform that is radical and unprecedented for Russia has already begun. The idea is to combine all types of levy for social purposes into a single social tax. That means change to the entire system of state governance of the social complex. A uniform tax on capital incomes will be introduced. The main taxes are to be reviewed not more than once a year. A significant reduction in the overall level of taxation is planned to coincide with adoption of the federal budget. We plan to broaden the range of tax concessions for capital investment by businesses. I am sure that all this will help secure the economic upturn. It is a vitally important task to force the state and its numerous bureaucrats to work for society, in the people's interest, instead of winding red tape. I intend to bring in a tougher personnel policy. Honestly, without your solid support it will simply impossible to do this. I am banking on help from the public, from journalists who at times can see what ministers cannot. [applause]

Many ministries and government departments have become havens for bureaucrats sacked elsewhere, jobs, former MPs, the friends and relatives of those at the top. No budget will be enough to feed such an army of bureaucrats. [applause]

That is why 20 percent, 30 percent or 40 percent reductions are a prime task, one of the first to be tackled. [applause]

Unwilling to work in a new way, those in power thought it preferable to indulge in self-aggrandizement. The struggle against corruption is proceeding with difficulties. Hardly all the representatives of the new wave of civil servants proved unequal to the task, unfortunately.

Measures which are harsh in the extreme must be applied to such people. The ground should burn under the very feet of those leaders and officials who overstepped the mark. [applause]

At the same time, all people serving the state, from the military to the judiciary, from the diplomatic to the municipal or manufacturing services should, if they conscientiously go about their duties, draw proper wages and should feel that their welfare is protected. [applause]

During the past few years we succeeded in creating a new face for Russia's legislative authority. We used to have an extremely inefficient system of our soviets, on which several million deputies sat. They provided a screen for the party diktat. We now have real bodies of legislative authority and, what is the main thing, their powers have been clearly defined.

The structures of the executive authority are being consistently reformed.

Structures of the executive authority are undergoing consistent reforms. These changes will be brought to an end without fail.

Weakness of some state bodies is now obvious. That is why, as president, I have to take responsibility for dealing with the most blatant blunders. In this way, I had to deal with the problem of delays in wage payments to employees of the state sector on the public payroll. As you know, in March we made a breakthrough and allocated 100 percent of funding. But the president had to start his work every day at 0830 with this question. That was the only way. Several ministers and heads of administration had to be dismissed, and court proceedings had to be instigated against dozens of bureaucrats who failed to comply with the president's decree and to make sure people get paid their wages. Instead, they invested them in banks for a month or two, kept the gains, and then started to pay out wages little by little after a couple of month.

Therefore, the federal authorities and the government were not the only ones to blame. The government was to blame too, I think. However, there were culprits lower down the line as well, and many of them have now been identified. Many are yet to be taken to court for going against the people, for jeopardizing the people and its rights protected by the Constitution.

My duty is to break the deadlock in finding a resolution to the grave crisis in Chechnya. I repeat once again ... [pause] I sent a telegram today, after checking it through very thoroughly yesterday. I sent a telegram to Zavgayev and Dudayev. And signed it personally. In accordance with my instructions and following the most thorough of checks, military operations by the federal forces have been halted. [applause]

Please verify that at all levels. Let the entire State Duma and Federation Council go and see, anyone who wants to, the procuracy, the courts, anyone at all. You will not find our forces initiating any kind of military adventure there. You will not. However difficult it is, we will do all we can to restore a stable peace in this region of Russia. Yet we must bear in mind that it is not a one-off measure but a serious matter. Withdrawing the troops from the republic is a particular problem. We are beginning to pull the troops out of regions that are calm and where there are no bandits. Where the local authorities are operating. Where the local Chechen police are operating. Where the Cossacks are helping. We are sending finance there to help, and withdrawing our armed forces to the border with Chechnya, not far away.

So that after the withdrawal a kind of belt of our armed forces can be organized around the border. If something happens, they will always be there at the border, on guard.

I believe there is no alternative to talks. I have taken as a premise and will continue to take as a premise that the territory of Russia is united and inseparable. [applause]

At the same time we are pursuing a strategy of deepened integration between Russia and those states who wish to follow Belarus in doing this. Our coming together will be determined not by fire and the sword, not by fear or deception. It will follow a peaceful and natural path. At the same time we shall never refuse our obligation to defend the rights and liberties of our compatriots living on the territory of the countries that were once part of the USSR.

The current situation of the Russian intelligentsia presents a special worry and heartfelt pain. I well remember the days when it was precisely its support that made it possible to start the reforms.

You remember the putsch? The intelligentsia from the higher educational establishments, the academic establishments, the technocrats and the artistic and cultural intelligentsia demanded freedom and this freedom became reality.

I doubt that even the most desperate of the orthodox would really want a return to the times of a harsh ideological squeeze. Nevertheless, it must be acknowledged that the intelligentsia finds itself in a critical situation. The financing of schools, higher educational establishments, science and culture from the budget fails to meet even the minimal requirements. I was told a great deal about this yesterday and the day before yesterday. I will not mention the objective difficulties here. I simply want to assure you of the fact that I think a great deal of how to improve the situation that has come about.

The experience of the past few years has convinced us that the freedom of artistic expression becomes devalued without financial support. It is the task of the state and my task as president to ensure that there is a constant increase in the proportion of budgetary appropriations for culture, education, science and I will ensure just that. [applause]

Summing up, let me name the 10 main directions of the work ahead. They are: to combat poverty on the basis of economic growth, to protect the family, maternity and childhood, to develop the health system, to develop culture, education and science, to wage struggle against crime and corruption, to carry out a legal reform, to have peace in Chechnya, to carry out a military reform, to defend Russian interests abroad, to effect integration with our CIS neighbors, to strengthen the civic peace in Russia.

Dear friends, our country has been and remains a great power. The selfless and talented Russian people has been and continues to exist. Great ideas and accomplishments, influencing the life of the whole world, have emerged and continue to emerge.

Why is it that our life is poorer and we have less than the world's developed countries?

Because for so long we were hostages to illusions. We thought we could make everyone and the whole world happy at a stroke. But he who wants to make mankind happy often hurts those who stand alongside him. As was written in the classic, Russia shows the way to all nations while itself treading blindly. The cause of reform is a truly patriotic cause, a Russian cause, and it is time to understand that we must work to provide a decent life for our own people and continue and complete our work to provide for our own country. Then the world will thank us. By the popular will, the Russian president is called on to work so that the people may flourish in all parts of the country for Russia. My policies, as those of the head of state, will remain dedicated to this aim. With this goal in mind, I intend to win the presidential election. [prolonged applause]

Our task is to bring the people of Russia together, to unite people of reason whose souls ache for our country. Elections can and should become a powerful force for all society to come together. Russia is going through a defining phase. The country is emerging from a grave crisis. None of the predictions of disaster, with which the enemies of reform intimidated us, has come true. Now we can do much that only two or three years ago was absolutely impossible.

It is not by chance that those who all that time have been sitting on the fence or throwing a wrench in the works will now stop at nothing in their pursuit of power. It is difficult for me to imagine what will happen if any of them wins the elections. We will end up with a new series of political conflicts. Because we are opposed by people who have been dazzled in their pursuit of power and by their thirst for revenge. Our duty to the memory of the millions tormented in the camps and to our children and descendants is to prevent neo-Stalinists, fascists and extremists from coming to power in Russia. Russia must enter the 21st Century without this filth. [prolonged applause]

Dear friends: I believe that the road to our victory at the elections starts here, in this audience! [applause]

This path is not strewn with roses. We must gather all our willpower, expertise, talent, honesty and ability to speak to people.

Yesterday I approved the concept of my election campaign. There is now a foundation for our work. One can't fail to win with such a team which I see here. We will win in order to prevent the return to the times when Russia was considered to be evil empire. We will win the elections, so that we could start sooner the life of freedom and dignity, just as all normal people live in all normal countries.

I announce with full responsibility that I have the power and the will to win. Let us fight together for the future of Russia.

Russia: Report on All-Russian Movement To Support Yeltsin

LD0604150796 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1000 GMT 6 Apr 96

[Report by unidentified correspondent on meeting of All-Russian Movement to support President Yeltsin's reelection, including recorded remarks by Sergey Filatov and President Yeltsin; from the "Vesti" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Announcer] Now for the main event that is in progress at this very minute. Today Russian President Boris Yeltsin at the congress of the All-Russian Movement in his support announced some key points of his election campaign.

[Correspondent] The meeting was opened by Sergey Filatov. In a brief announcement he reminded those present that on 3 April Boris Yeltsin became an official candidate for the post of the country's president.

[Filatov] We believe in victory of the organization because it stands to reason that the cause you have taken up — the grand transformations — cannot fail to win. For too long Russia has suffered. It has been awaiting for its hour for too long for it to turn back again to the long years of stagnation. [applause]

[Correspondent] Then Sergey Filatov declared the congress open and gave the floor to Boris Yeltsin.

[Yeltsin] Beginning in gratitude to the millions of citizens who signed in favor of my being put forward I will say honestly: Your support and your energy are my strength, and that is why I firmly believe in our common victory, the victory of a free Russia.

[Correspondent] Boris Yeltsin said that for tactical reasons today he intentionally would not present his pre-election campaign. Concerning what he had succeeded in doing, Boris said that the time had come to adjust the reforms that should work for the good of the individual.

[Yeltsin] The main role in the reforms should be played by the people. We do not need reforms just for their own sake. The large amount of painstaking work that has been under way for five years now and will be continued has its clear goals. They are the well-being of the individual and the well-being of the family. This is the main thing. The core of our entire policy for the next four years is to help the Russian family to stand firmly on its feet.

[Correspondent] Boris Yeltsin considers another major task of the present stage to be concern for the older generation. He said he intended to decree an increase in the minimum pension.

[Yeltsin] We can and must act so that the elderly do not feel forgotten, humiliated, feel indifference. I consider that our country should have a federal program of care for the older generation on the same lines as the Children of Russia program — precisely an Older Generation program.

[Correspondent] Then Boris Yeltsin spoke of the problem of Chechnya.

[Yeltsin] My duty is to break the deadlock in resolving the very difficult Chechen crisis. I repeat once again: Today after careful verification, I sent the following telegram to Zavgayev and Dudayev, and signed it personally. In accordance with my orders and following a carefully conducted check, military activities on the part of the federal forces have ceased. Please check at all levels. You can go — the whole membership of the State Duma, Federation Council, you know, whatever you like, the Prosecutor's Office, Courts, everything.

[Correspondent] In conclusion, Boris Yeltsin stated:

[Yeltsin] For me victory in the elections is not victory over a political opponent, but the condition for successfully completing the main task of my life and of all of us — the revival of a new democratic Russia. We will win so that these elections may not be the last. I have no doubt of victory. I ask those of little faith not to panic, and some of you not to hasten to change the portraits. [applause]

Russia: Yeltsin Comments on Visit to Belgorod

LD0504201896 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1504 GMT 5 Apr 96

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Boris Yeltsin is back in Moscow after two days of travelling through the Belgorod region.

Asked to sum up his impressions of the trip for Interfax, Yeltsin said that his chief impression was the people's desire to promote reforms, and their trust for the local leadership. "The impression from what I have seen is strong. Of course, there are difficulties, and people did not hide them. Now all people earn enough money. We will work toward this end," president stressed.

According to Yeltsin, he asked constituents to vote for him at the presidential ballot in June, to vote "for the continuation of reforms." "I guarantee that there will be no more twists and turns in Russian history. We do not need any revolutions. What we need is economic progress, better living standards for people, and stability for the country," Yeltsin said.

He devoted the second, conclusive, day of his working trip to the Belgorod region wholly to the discussion of social issues. Social problems were in focus at his meetings with regional leaders and industrial corporation managers and at conversations with ordinary people on the streets and at memorials.

Stressing at one such gathering that a key task for the Russian authorities is to improve the people's living standards "step by step," he nonetheless stressed that he was categorically against achieving this goal by "restarting a machine for printing empty money." "As long as I am president, that won't take place in Russia," Yeltsin declared.

Noting that the country's leadership links better living standards above all with economic recovery, president said that "after the hard years of reform that is inevitable."

Yeltsin then called for putting the payment of wages, pensions, and security benefits into order and stressed that "this problem is far-fetched in many ways." Charging appropriate control bodies with "connivance", he pledged "to mend the situation", saying that he personally controls this process.

Failure to pay wages and social benefits on time "is a major problem not only for the president and government but for all Russian authorities from top to bottom," Yeltsin declared.

In regard to foreign investment in Russia, he said that although businessmen are rich, "they are not in a hurry to invest their money, expecting the outcome of the presidential ballot." "The presidential elections day will be crucial not only to Russia's politics but to its economics, too," president said.

Voicing firm conviction that Russia must become a presidential republic, Yeltsin said that "nothing else but democracy and the presidential form of rule will guarantee our country's future."

In his opinion, it is such a form that guarantees "free society and just government."

Stressing that "Russia needs a universally recognized leader, Yeltsin said that this is not only a Russian tradition but a natural phenomenon for a great power. Regardless of who will be president, such a form of democratic rule is "the common heritage and achievement of Russians."

"One of the key goals I set to myself is to hold democratic presidential elections in Russia every five years so that we could be sure in that as we are sure that day will come after night," Yeltsin went on to say.

He then focussed on CIS integration.

As the Belgorod region borders with Ukraine, he urged regional leaders "to restore economic contacts on a new basis."

Singling out Belarus as Russia's closest CIS partner, Yeltsin said that integration with other CIS countries has been proceeding at a slower pace.

"Not only Russia sets the tone in this process. If our neighbors have the desire for more rapprochement, we will meet them half way. If everything depended on Russia, integration would be much deeper today," he said, noting that "Russia want integration to be mutually advantageous. We help a partner the best we can, but to carry the whole mass of others problems is a too heavy burden for us to shoulder."

Recalling that the Russian-Belarusian integration accord was signed in Moscow on April 2, Yeltsin said that "it is too early to predict what will this community turn into five years later, it is too premature to say if it will be a federation or a confederation, life will show."

Social issues were also in focus at Yeltsin's meeting with workers of the Staroskolsky metallurgic complex.

Predicting that "prices will grow slower than pay" in the near future, president based his forecast on accurate statistics. He also reported to have given the government a week to work out a program of developing the Belgorod region's metallurgic complex through the year 2000.

Yeltsin devoted Friday afternoon to the familiarization with some of the memorials in the Belgorod region. At Prokhorovka, a regional center where a historic tank battle was fought during world war two, he laid a wreath to pay homage to the soldiers.

Talking to local residents, Yeltsin said called Prokhorovka a sacred land. "Although it is black in color, this land is golden in every sense of this word. It was not by chance that German invaders tried to move it out by carriages from here. Thank God, we defended the homeland," president said.

He then dwelled on the Black Sea Fleet problem. Confirming that Russia and Ukraine are still at odds on the issue, "we have maintained all along that Sevastopol is a Russian naval base on the Black Sea," Yeltsin said, adding that he has not gone to Kiev "precisely for this reason so far."

Analyzing the outcome of the many discussions he had with Belgorod residents, he paid special attention to the problem of pensioners. He reported that some time in May he would sign a decree on hiking pensions in Russia and "in couple of weeks", he will sign a decree on financial support for the country's agro-industrial complex.

Everyone he has talked to has wished him a victory at the forthcoming presidential elections.

On the eve of the trip, Yeltsin took part in a session of the interregional association Chernozemye or black soil, which comprises seven Russian regions.

In his speech at the meeting, he stressed that "the foundations of a market economy have been created, finances have been stabilized, and prerequisites of economic growth are in sight. The most difficult period of reform is over," and the country can get down to active social policy. "Better living standards for Russia are at the forefront of reform," Yeltsin stressed.

Lashing out against "the vicious practice of delaying the payment of wages to budget sphere workers," president recalled that task has been set to repay this debt. "Tough measures had to be applied, some managers have had to part with their posts," Yeltsin said, reporting that the Prosecutor General's Office has opened 45 criminal cases on wages non-payment.

Finances have been remitted to regions in full by early April as promised, president said.

Talking about social issues, he singled out the key housing problem.

He reported that a federal purposeful program Your Home is being drafted in a bid to build inexpensive private housing for Russians.

"The government has been instructed to endorse the program in June, obviously before the elections," president said.

Talking about the agro-industrial complex, Yeltsin said that it is still being gripped by recession.

Speaking about the overall social and economic situation in the Central Chernozemye Region, he described it as "relatively stable."

Foreseeing "big and early investment in Russia as a whole and in its regions," Yeltsin based his forecast on his meetings with businessmen in various countries and stressed the need to ensure risky investment especially in small businesses.

Reporting that he has signed a decree to lay a gas pipeline to the region in by the year 2000, he said that decrees are being drafted on a financial mechanism for land reform in the Belgorod region and on developing the metallurgic complex of the region.

Discussing the tax reform in detail, Yeltsin said that the draft of a new tax code offers a new classification of taxes and formulates the criterion of dividing taxes into federal, regional, and local.

Speaking about the tax reform, Yeltsin spelled out six basic points:

1. All deductions for social needs will be combined in a single tax, which means that the whole system of social complex management will be changed.

2. Capital profits will be levied by a single tax, and as a result the tax on profit and surtax will be revised.

3. To stabilize the taxation scheme, basic taxes will be revised no more than once a year to coincide with the adoption of a federal budget.

4. Overall taxation will be slashed.

5. The rate of federal tax on profit will be reduced for banks and insurance companies, working with farms.

6. Businesses, investing in industrial production, will be entitled to tax benefits.

Small enterprises and public organizations of invalids will be entitled to tax privileges, too.

At a meeting with farmers of the Frunze collective farm, Yeltsin called for a variety in farming. "The basic criterion is effective production," he said.

According to president, farms are run at a loss on three fourths of Russia's territory. He blamed this partly on monopoly: more than a half of the produce in the country is sold on the free market on monopoly high prices.

Voicing concern at meagre investment in the food market, Yeltsin described as extremely weak the material and technical base of this market and admitted that the wages of rural residents are really miserable.

Mapping out short-term measures, Yeltsin called for applying market principles to agriculture and urged the government to support farmers. He reported that the mechanism of buying crops from farms will be "cardinally changed". He also gave an assurance that those who investment in agriculture will be rewarded with tax benefits.

Among the concrete measures to be carried out, Yeltsin pointed to the upcoming revision of custom duties on food. "They must be tied up with the level of domestic production's profitability," Yeltsin said.

Russia: Ryzhkov, Lukyanov React to Yeltsin's Criticism

LD0504170496 Moscow NTV in Russian 1500 GMT 5 Apr 96

[From the "Segodnya" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Announcer Tatyana Mitkova] Passions have arisen over the president's comments about three State Duma deputies. At a meeting with local people during his visit to Belgorod yesterday, Yeltsin said the following about Nikolay Ryzhkov, Valentin Varennikov, and Anatoliy Lukyanov:

[begin recording] [Unidentified woman, over video of Yeltsin on walkabout] Boris Nikolayevich, what about the people on the State Committee for the State of Emergency, Lukyanov and...

[Unidentified man] Why is he in the State Duma?

[Yeltsin, over much noise] It is a disgrace, of course. That Ryzhkov, Varennikov — they should be somewhere else, in Matrossaya Tishina for example! [laughter] [end recording]

[Mitkova] Nikolay Ryzhkov is the most perplexed at this, finding himself among the potential inmates of the Moscow prison with former members of the State Committee for the State of Emergency who have already been inside. The communists are demanding an apology from Yeltsin, and the State Duma put the issue on the agenda.

[begin recording] [Unidentified correspondent, over video of State Duma session] Nikolay Ryzhkov responded first thing this morning to Yeltsin's words, making a suitable statement at a ceremony at which Russian youth organizations signed an agreement in support of Zyuganov as presidential candidate. Ryzhkov declared that he was refusing the increase in pension he receives as a former USSR civil servant, which Yeltsin decreed on 1 April.

A little later, in an interview to the NTV television film crew, the former Soviet prime minister said the following about the president's comments in Belgorod:

[Ryzhkov, interviewed in a corridor] What annoys me, first and foremost, is that a president should never stoop to this sort of thing. He is not a prosecutor, he is not a judge. If we are guilty of something, then let the proper bodies investigate it. But we do not feel we are guilty of anything, we have simply taken up our own position. Everyone has his own position, that is what democracy means. Or must we all be arranged in a hierarchy again, with everyone taking the same line?

And the second thing that astounded and irritated me was that this was done in my electoral constituency!

[Correspondent] Anatoliy Lukyanov reacted rather differently.

[Lukyanov, interviewed in a corridor] The president has at last shown his true colors! So what does he understand democracy to be? It turns out that he understands democracy to be an order under which the opposition should be in prison. If that is the case, then it is the clearest thing he has said. Let the voters assess what sort of president it is who wants a democracy where the opposition is in prison. That is all there is to it! [passage omitted] [end recording]

Russia: Chernomyrdin Interviewed on Chechnya, Elections

LD0704193896 Moscow NTV in Russian 1700 GMT 7 Apr 96

[Interview with Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin by correspondent Yevgeniy Kiselev in Moscow on 6 April; from the "Itogi" program — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Kiselev] Viktor Stepanovich, a week has passed since the president publicized his program for a peace settlement in Chechnya. But the killing continues there. On Friday alone, over 30 federal troops were killed in fighting near the village of Goyskoye. Does this mean that the program's first clause, the one about the troops halting operations and regarded by everyone to be the most important clause, is not being carried out?

[Chernomyrdin] I would not say that the president's orders are not being carried out. What I have to say is that presidential edict will be carried out by everyone. Absolutely everyone. And the presidential edict on measures to resolve the Chechnya crisis sets out all the issues — political, economic ones on restoration there, and the military issues, that is, when and in what circumstances combat operations will stop. And that is as of the moment of publication. There was even a telegram today, which he made public himself this morning and signed this morning, ordering an end to all operations.

[Kiselev] That is right. The president even said today that the telegram was sent not only to Doku Zavgayev, the head of the Chechen Republic, but to Dzhokhar Dudayev as well. INTERFAX reported that at about 1230 on Saturday. But about an hour later and quoting the federal command of the troops in Chechnya, it was reporting that air and artillery strikes were at that moment in progress against rebel positions near the village of Goyskoye and that federal troops will continue operations after the rebels' defenses had been destroyed. That was an hour after the president issued his instructions to halt the fighting, for the second time. Something is not right there.

[Chernomyrdin] I cannot say that, I do not think that is what is happening. Because the president personally warned all leaders, all of them, including military leaders, of their responsibility. I have just come from the meeting and know nothing of these reports. We need to take a closer look at who started it. If people are dying and there are attacks on checkpoints and not only checkpoints and attempts at seizure, then of course, as it says in the edict and in other rulings, terrorism and terror will be punished.

[Kiselev] To judge by the language here, it is offensive action being reported...

[Chernomyrdin, interrupting] I repeat, I cannot say anything about it.

[Kiselev] Positions are being sealed off somewhere near Goyskoye.

[Chernomyrdin] I do not know, as I said as we were on our way here, we need to get to the bottom of it.

[Kiselev] I did not expect you to be uninformed on this.

[Chernomyrdin] I do not have any information.

[Kiselev] But Viktor Stepanovich, surely you will agree that the impression is being created, and many people have said this, that somebody here in Moscow has a great interest in preventing a peace settlement.

[Chernomyrdin] Well, just lately I get asked if there is somebody else quite frequently. But I do not think that anyone could suspect the leadership of this. Now that the president has made this move, and I have to say it was not an easy thing for the president to do, then I cannot even...[pauses] it is nobody near me. There probably is someone who needs the war.

[Kiselev] One example, Viktor Stepanovich. I was with a film crew in Kazan on Wednesday [3 April] to shoot an interview with Tatarstan President Mintimer Shaymiyev who was inaugurated for a second term in office that day. You were present at the occasion. The interview took place in the morning, before the inauguration, and Mintimer Shaymiyev in remarks that went out on air made it clear that the president found it very difficult to make that decision and that he came under pressure from the forces departments not to make the decision, especially the part about talks with Dudayev through mediators. When I asked if there had been heavy pressure, Mintimer Sharipovich was a little bemused and said that was a very naive question.

[Chernomyrdin] I do not know what and how much Mintimer Sharipovich Shaymiyev knows. But I was involved in the security decisions and in all the main negotiations and I know the president's intentions. He is a tough man and he has clear-cut intentions to stop this matter and sort it out. And it cannot be resolved through war. If we have to sit at the negotiating table, then we should do it.

[Kiselev] And incidents like the one overnight from 2-3 April in the Chechen village of Shalazhy have to be prevented, do you not agree? The previous day it had signed a peace agreement with the federal troops and here it was getting bombed, having its houses and buildings destroyed.

[Chernomyrdin] [words indistinct] The procurator general has been instructed and an investigation is now underway. Even if I were against talks, the decision has been made and it has to be put into effect. Nobody is entitled to flout it. I do not think that someone just felt like bombing the place. There is more to it than that. I think we will get to the bottom of it. And I do not think that the president's instructions...[pauses] I do not think the president will leave this issue open.

[Kiselev] [words indistinct] ...that is almost Turkish territory. Or they are flying out of Azerbaijan.

[Chernomyrdin] I cannot, I cannot say anything about that at all. It needs investigation and checks, but once again, nobody is allowed to evade or reject decisions that have been made.

[Kiselev] Let us look at the situation from a different angle. If Dudayev or his supporters carry on fighting, then what will the government do about that? Will it be war all the way to the victorious end? With colossal losses?

[Chernomyrdin] First, that would be madness. I do not think that anyone is now saying that war can solve the problem. Look at how many measures there have been. Amnesty. Forgiveness for those who, so to speak, had no evil intent.

What else is necessary? Therefore, I say once again that the country's leadership and the president took these measures and we will fulfill them — we are urging them — including all measures...

[Kiselev, interrupting] And talks, too?

[Chernomyrdin] And the talks process. We agree to any conditions.

[Kiselev] Well, probably not any... Chechnya's full sovereignty...

[Chernomyrdin] Quite, I am talking about the talks process itself. But as far as the conditions you are talking about, there can be no other conditions. This is a region of Russia, so there can be no question of integrity. There can be no question of that.

[Kiselev] But what about special status like that of...

[Chernomyrdin, interrupting] There is a question here and we will examine it and we need to find a peaceful outcome. We need to set all these processes going in a peaceful way. Look, the talks process is underway. It is building up. Every day people are coming up — I understand that people feel despair in this situation. They come up and say that they are not happy about everything. It is another matter that...[words indistinct]

[Kiselev] Look, when the people of a Chechen village find they are being bombed or shelled they are prepared to sign any agreement, but then there are no guarantees that it will be fulfilled.

[Chernomyrdin] Look, I say once again that everything is not so simple. Even getting to the talks process is not such a simple matter. In point of fact, it happened that they stopped, and look what happened next. One should not forget — what did the commander suffer for? The commander, the general was in favor of the talks process with every fiber of his being. How he did not want a continuation of the hostilities! Look what they did to him.

[Kiselev] But look, we still do not know who did this.

[Chernomyrdin] That is right.

[Kiselev] After all, the talks process had been virtually disrupted even before the attack on the general commander.

[Chernomyrdin] Yes, of course. But, look, there were a series of attempts on his life.

[Kiselev] Before that there was an unsuccessful attempt on Lobov's life.

[Chernomyrdin] The president's representative had just arrived to take up his powers and his main task was to put right the peaceful rebuilding process, to organize it, and look, straightaway there was an attempt on his life. So, here there are some people here making accusations and holding something against people among the federal troops and the government — there cannot be any question of the president — so, no. One gets the impression here that someone wants to present everything in a different light, although precisely who...

[Kiselev] And this specific case will be sorted out?

[Chernomyrdin] By all means, naturally. I can say that I met Chief Prosecutor Skuratov yesterday, and there are people who are dealing with the investigation.

[Kiselev] In other words, a special group to investigate this incident has been set up?

[Chernomyrdin] Yes, yes.

[Kiselev] I see. In conclusion I would like to ask you about your role in the presidential election campaign. You are one of the leaders of the council headed by the president himself, you are one of his two deputies. What are your specific duties and responsibilities?

[Chernomyrdin] I am a member of the council, I am even the first deputy — I have been promoted. This is natural, the council unites the main colleagues, all those who get together once a week, only on Saturdays, to discuss various issues, their state, and what should be done. There are no concrete instructions putting people in charge of a specific range of issues. I think that if Boris Nikolayevich is away, for instance, if he goes on a business trip, which is a frequent occurrence now, then I will...

[Kiselev, interrupting] Take administration upon yourself?

[Chernomyrdin] Well, yes [giggles]. Well, people need to have somebody to seek advice from and all that, otherwise it is simply impossible.

[Kiselev] In conclusion, Viktor Stepanovich, I would like to ask you the last question and a very delicate one. When cosmonauts are preparing for a flight they always have stand-ins. The Communists, who are your main rivals, have replacements for Gennadiy Zyuganov in case unforeseen circumstances arise, as the saying goes, they have other candidates who, for the time being, are taking part in the election campaign. At the same time, Boris Nikolayevich has no stand-in in the elections. If, God forbid, something happened, would not it be sensible for you, as the second top official in our state, to register just in case and take part in the election campaign for the time being, while knowing in advance that at a certain stage you will quit the race?

[Chernomyrdin] You know, it is a difficult question for me too. I have not done this only because it is not necessary.

[Kiselev] Even just in case, even just to safeguard yourselves?

[Chernomyrdin] There will be no cases, Yevgeniy. Everything will be all right. The president is ready for the elections, and I believe that our people will understand and they already understand. I believe that the elections will be held and a president will be elected. And I believe that Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin will be elected president.

[Kiselev] Thank you for the interview, Viktor Stepanovich.

[Chernomyrdin] Thank you.

Russia: Pollsters, Zaslavskaya View Yeltsin's Reelection Prospects

BR0504125296 Copenhagen DET FRI AKTUELT in Danish 3 Apr 96 p 18

[Report by Per Dalgard: "Yeltsin Scores With Chechnya Peace Plan"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Peace plans and cooperation treaties put the Russian president on a winning course in the run-up to the election — and besides he is the democrats' only bid.

Three different analysts in Moscow independent of each other predict that Boris Yeltsin stands to win the presidential election in June, if there are no serious catastrophes for his campaign strategy.

The most important reason for Yeltsin's steadily improving chances of reelection is that democratically-oriented Russians will in the last resort vote for him instead of the communist, Zyuganov. At the same time Yeltsin has apparently regained his old fighting spirit and charisma when appearing in public.

It also helps that he has taken a series of steps which are viewed positively by the public. This applies primarily to the new attempt to get the peace process in Chechnya moving, salary payments to all government employees, and political and economic rapprochement with a number of former Soviet republics, most recently the treaty with Belarus which was signed yesterday.

Yeltsin Best Under Fire

Sociologist and writer Yuriy Levada, who heads the public opinion institute VCIOM, told DET FRI AKTUELT by telephone that according to the institute's latest poll Yeltsin is likely to get 18 percent of the vote in the first round of the election and Zyuganov 25 percent. Both are far ahead of the other candidates and will therefore go into the second round, according to VCIOM.

Here the poll shows that both are likely to receive 30 percent of the vote, but that 40 percent of voters are still undecided.

"Boris Yeltsin's political weight is growing very quickly at present," Yuriy Levada said. "A very short time ago he looked like winning around 11 percent of the vote in the first round of the election, and there was every indication that he would lose. But the recent positive steps have increased his chances significantly. Zyuganov's popularity has stagnated, while Yeltsin is winning more and more votes. If there are no big upsets everything now points toward his winning."

Levada points out that it is now clear that democrats will not appear to be a united force behind any candidate other than Yeltsin, and that they will therefore — perhaps very much against their own will — vote for him when they are confronted in the second round of the election with a choice between him and the communist Zyuganov.

According to Levada, the recent Chechnya initiative, as feeble and precarious as it is, is playing a decisive role, because it creates a chance of reducing military action and sends a war-weary people the signal that there is now perhaps hope of peace.

"Besides which the president has now begun to appear in his fine old form, which we haven't seen him in for almost five years."

Gorbachev Has No Chance

Sociologist Tatyana Zaslavskaya, who heads the independent Academic Center for Sociological Research and was formerly a top advisor to President Mikhail Gorbachev, agrees with Yuriy Levada's assessment.

"Yeltsin's chances looked extremely bad just two months ago, and that was a clear sign of people's deep disappointment with him. He appeared uncertain, did not want to admit to mistakes, and often acted like a typical communist first secretary. But now he seems transformed.

"This is typical Yeltsin. He is always ready for a fight, and thrives on political brawls. I think that he will succeed in uniting the democrats in the second round of the election. The democrats will also vote for Yeltsin as the lesser of two evils, and besides, the Communists are always showing themselves from their worst side — fossilized in the ideology of the past which only old pensioners want back again."

Tatyana Zaslavskaya also thinks that the Chechnya question is extremely important for the outcome of the election.

"Yeltsin will not be able to create peace in this short time, that is simply not within his power. But with the new peace plan he has succeeded in telling the people that he wants to end the war and that there is actually hope of peace. That may be decisive for his reelection."

The well-known sociologist does not give her former boss, Mikhail Gorbachev, a chance of being elected and does not understand why he is even running. She says further that neither the nationalist Zhirinovskiy, democrat Grigoriy Yavlinskiy, nor General Lebed have a chance of interfering in the race between Zyuganov and Yeltsin.

"There are many indications that Zhirinovskiy himself has realized that he does not have a chance, and that he is therefore asking the nationalists to vote for Yeltsin. Because he himself would loose everything with a communist election victory, whereas he will probably be able to go on floundering about in parliament if Yeltsin remains in power."

Campaign Staff Not Good Enough

One of Russia's most incisive political analysts, psychologist Nugzar Betaneli, who heads the public opinion poll organization, Institute for Parliamentary Sociology, is less straightforward in his evaluation of the election outcome. On the telephone from Moscow he said that the institute's first major prognosis will not be ready for 10 days, but that he sees the same tendencies in voter movement as Levada of VCIOM.

Betaneli also says that the pendulum is swinging to Yeltsin's advantage in time with the latest political initiatives, but stresses at the same time that there is a long way to go to catch up.

"Yeltsin's problem is his staff. They do not work well enough and too slowly. Positive steps such as the Chechnya peace proposal, rapprochement with Belarus, Kazakhstan, and the Kyrgyz Republic and the payment of withheld salaries, are weighed up by a series of negative social and political factors. Yeltsin's people must work better and faster in order to maintain the positive swing among the electorate. There are only two months left in which to act."

On the other hand, the period before the election may prove to be much too long for Boris Yeltsin and his staff. The risk of using the ruins of Chechnya in the election campaign is that rebel leader Dzhokhar Dudayev could very well make it difficult to continue the peace effort if his troops keep on fighting at the same strength or try new terrorist actions in Russia.

Russia: Zhirinovskiy Becomes Third Official Presidential Candidate

LD0504190396 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1600 GMT 5 Apr 96

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Announcer Svetlana Sorokina] The reason for the absence of the deputies of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia faction at the Duma session is well known. It was a historic day for their leader today — he became the third official presidential candidate.

[begin recording] [Correspondent M. Tumanova] Vladimir Zhirinovskiy has become the third officially registered candidate for the office of Russian president after Gennadiy Zyuganov and Boris Yeltsin. During the course of a week, having checked the lists of signatures of over 1.6 million citizens, the Central Electoral Commission rejected over 95,000 signatures. But a certificate of registration was today ceremoniously presented to the new candidate. The candidate's reply speech was not as colorful as usual. He described the moment as historic, readily acknowledged the remarks made by the Central Electoral Commission, and heartily thanked the commission for its fine work. Then he praised the triumph of democracy and freedom of speech in Russia. The ceremony had the lot: Congratulations, posing for the cameras, and an interview in the Central Electoral Commission hall itself. The commission was forced to break off the session for a few minutes.

[Zhirinovskiy] It is the greatest achievement for a political leader to become a presidential candidate. There is nothing higher than that.

[Tumanova] But weren't you annoyed that you weren't the first candidate to be registered?

[Zhirinovskiy] On the contrary, that's fine! Now it seems we have the Big Three. God loves a threesome, just like in Russian folklore with these three warriors at the crossroads and wondering which way to turn. The first three candidates represent the three main forces — the left, the incumbent power, and a third party that is not a communist one. That is a fine set of forces.

[Tumanova] The Yabloko electoral association today presented to the Central Electoral Commission all the documents for registering Grigoriy Yavlinskiy as a presidential candidate. Unable to be one of the first to do this, they decided to take the lead in another matter; Yabloko has collected 3 million signatures, more than all the others. The record-breaker gathered signatures in 68 of Russia's regions. [video shows Zhirinovskiy being presented with his registration card by Nikolay Ryabov, Central Electoral Commission chairman, and waving it in triumph, talking to correspondent; close-up of Yabloko's list]

Russia: Yeltsin Returns Several Federal Laws to State Duma

LD0804121396 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1100 GMT 8 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Boris Yeltsin has again turned down a number of federal laws and returned them to the State Duma. They include the laws on amendments and additions to the law on veterans, the federal set of textbooks for general education schools, the granting of certain social guarantees to Heroes of Socialist Labor, secret inventions, and the suspension of the unilateral reduction of the Black Sea Fleet and its upkeep. All these laws were adopted in contravention of constitutional requirements, says a message from the president to Gennadiy Seleznev, chairman of the State Duma.

Russia: Yeltsin's Regional Wage Payments Examined

964F1681A Moscow ARGUMENTY I FAKTY in Russian Apr 96 No 14, p 3

[Report by Yelena Nikitina: "Money Has Been Transferred. Has Everybody Received Back Pay?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] There is no greater joy these days than to hear that wages, held up for half a year, have finally been received. We wanted very much to share this joy with all Russians, keeping in mind that just before 1 April the center's last debts were transferred to the regions...

"ARGUMENTY I FAKTY Sent Us R42 billion..."

"Hello, Tver, R42.1 billion [rubles] has been transferred to you; have you received this money?"

"Who is this? What billions? Transferred when?"

"This is ARGUMENTY I FAKTY, there is such a newspaper in Moscow. The money has been transferred to pay off back wages. I do not know when precisely it was sent to you, but in general transfers began on 19 March."

"Wait a minute, I will find out."

Then, a voice on the local line.

"A call came from ARGUMENTY I FAKTY; they sent us R42 billion... Billion... Or million?.. No, billion, I am sure... Has it been received?"

"It was not us who sent it!" I am yelling into the receiver as loud as I can, attempting to eliminate the confusion. "The government transferred it! And not to the administration but to the whole oblast! For wages!"

...As it turned out, Tver did receive the money. As did Adygea, North Ossetia, Orenburg, Altay Kray, Tomsk, and Ryazan... We got confirmation in 11 regions of Russia, and given the quality of our telephone networks, this sample may absolutely safely be considered random.

There was not a single negative answer to our inquiries, which, as a matter of fact, agreed with the official information.

Money Does Not Buy Happiness—Its Quantity and Speed of Movement Does

It would be naive to think that our state has "scrounged its cornbins" and gave the people trillions of rubles as a gift. First of all, the billions sent to the regions consisted of a targeted interest-free repayable loan from the budget; transfers (funds that are first transferred from the regions to the center, and then back again; this happens, for instance, with pensions); as well as arrears in mutual payments. In different regions the ratio between these line items within the published amounts differs; in some places there are no loans, and in some—no arrears on mutual payments.

On top of this, the mind-boggling—by ordinary measures—billions turned out to be not so large. For instance, in Altay Kray, of the R395 billion received, R308.4 billion turned out to be a loan, and the rest—transfers for January (!).

In Tomsk Oblast—R13 billion in loans, and another R32 billion or so—transfers for last year. Well, Happy New Year, dear Tomsk residents. We are not congratulating you on your newfound happiness, because you are still R60 billion short of complete happiness.

Volgograd Oblast did not get any loan at all, and of the R64.2 billion, R58.2 billion was transfers for last year.

The list could be continued, but the picture is clear anyway. One bright spot: Although there is still a catastrophic shortage of money, the speed of its movement around the country this time was simply fantastic. Compare for yourself. During noncash transfers between organizations within Moscow, much smaller amounts sometimes float for five days. Within the framework of implementation of the presidential plan of support for the regions, however, designed to pay off arrears in wages, allowances for children, and other social benefits, in some "forward" oblasts only one week passed between the transfer of the funds from Moscow and their distribution to workers and the needy. At least, this is the official, government viewpoint.

Few Are Interested in Wages

As a rule, in each region only one person—the chief of the financial administration—could confirm receipt of the "presidential" billions. Other—very high-ranking—bureaucrats, however, as well as their secretaries and aides, frequently had trouble figuring out what money we were talking about. For instance, in one oblast I was referred to...the accounting department. As it turned out, the same one that issues salaries to the aforementioned bureaucrats.

Recalling my own work in an office where salaries were not paid for months, I can tell that you that as soon as the slightest glimmer of hope appeared that the long-earned money was coming, this pleasant piece of news instantly reached those on vacation, or on sick leave, or even those who have already resigned. So if the problem of wage arrears concerns only one person in the oblast, it means that others are not doing all that badly. Or that the "flushed-out" amounts absolutely will not solve families' money problems. The latter appears more likely.

Appetite Satisfied 100 Percent

The presidential plan was implemented—practically personally—by the president's economic adviser Aleksandr Livshits. He says that it is too late now to complain that the allocated funds are not sufficient: Whoever did not ask for much did not get much.

All governors' requests have been fully satisfied. So, Moscow cannot be accused of stinginess—but heads of local administrations can and should be accused of insufficient appetite.

There is no need to get jittery over the words "repayable loan," assured Livshits. Nobody will ask the regions to pay back "live money"—the question of loan repayment will be considered separately.

In the regions, on the other hand, the reaction to the money transfer from Moscow is strange. First, everybody wants more. Second, there are some who have not yet received this money but are already asking: "When is another installment coming?"

By the way, according to Aleksandr Yakovlevich, a week after the money was transferred from Moscow it was already distributed by payroll lists.

The Labor Inspectorate of Russia (responsible for monitoring the proper issue of wages) does not yet have data, however, that the money has reached the people. They expect the first positive information by approximately 5 April.

By Livshits' forecast, all the money transferred will be distributed by 10 April. The labor inspectors' professional pessimism dictates a final date for payoffs: 15-20 April. In this case, Livshits predicts the president's wrath...

Meanwhile, currently approximately 40,000 enterprises in Russia, in violation of all laws and procedures, do not calculate wages at all. Why? It is best to ask the directors this question, not the state!

P.S. Eight Russian regions, including Moscow, for some reason refused to take the "presidential" billions. Do they have enough of their own?

Russia: Luzhkov Writes on Duma, Belovezhskaya Accords

964F1689A Moscow LITERATURNAYA GAZETA in Russian 27 Mar 96 No 13, p 1

[Article by Yuriy Luzhkov, mayor of Moscow: "Populism Is Dearer to Them Than Russia"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Last week Yuriy Luzhkov declared that he would accept the offer of numerous action committees that had nominated him for the office of mayor of the capital and would take part in the elections.

Today the leader of the Moscow Government shares with LITERATURNAYA GAZETA readers his thoughts on recent political events in Russia.

I would like to say at once and without any equivocation: I am concerned today not so much by who becomes the next mayor as by whom Russia elects as its president. And it is by no means a question of personalities here. On 16 June we will be electing not a personality but the road by which the country will travel. There are just two roads here. Either forward or back. Perhaps for this reason all the talk about a "third force" and "special way" seems to me either guile or naivete. Nonetheless, I believe that Russia will not turn aside from the path of reforms, which, of course, have in far from all instances been undertaken judiciously, humanely, or consistently. But there are now millions of people who no longer want to turn back. The price of such a turning would be too high.

I realize that it is far more difficult for Nizhniy Novgorod Governor Boris Nemtsov, as a young person, than for people who are somewhat older to imagine what would happen in the event of a communist president coming to power. But nonetheless, the airiness with which he declared the inevitability of the Communists' victory cannot fail to astonish.

In his first statement Boris Yefimovich even expressed a certain optimism: They will come to office and be able to do nothing, for there is already in the country such a defender of democracy as the free press. It, allegedly, will curb the Communists' offensive against civil rights and liberties, prevent a recoil, and so forth.

What enviable youthful romanticism! The main thing, which the Communist Party has never forgotten, is strict control of the mass information media incorporating personnel policy, ideological influence, and censorship. I would advise those who do not believe in so "bright" a prospect for our press to read Lenin's article "the Party Organization and Party Literature." It explains theoretically what reigned in the press and on radio and television under the Communists.

One further typical delusion (and Boris Nemtsov shares it, it has seemed to me) is the totally unfounded confidence that the West will prevent the Russian Communists realizing their plans. We have big debts owing the Western world, it is said, and the new authorities will have to take account of its opinion, therefore.

How the Bolsheviks pay their debts is well known also: After the 1917 revolution, Russia renounced its debts. But in having disavowed all the obligations of tsarist Russia, we lost Alaska. And this was a loss exceeding in size all the debts at that time. In other words, political extremism always has serious economic consequences.

We should not be comforting ourselves with the illusion that those now straining after power would, if successful, heed the opinion of the civilized world. They have even today given proof of how they would behave tomorrow. I refer to the well-known decision of the State Duma on denunciation of the Belovezhskaya agreements, in whose adoption the CPRF parliamentary faction played first fiddle.

I am sure that millions of people are experiencing regret and bitterness at the disintegration of the USSR. There have, truly, been many costs. Numerous ties have been demolished, the economy of the former Union republics has been put in a fever, and many people have become second-class citizens in the places where they live. Generally, much has with justification been written about the negative consequences which the disintegration of the USSR has entailed. There truly is a gravitation toward rapprochement among the now-independent states. But how and on what basis to create a commonwealth that would viable under the new historical conditions—this is the question. Any attempt to ignore here the voluntary principle would end in bloodshed. It is sufficient to recall that in the USSR, which was formed in 1922, the struggle against the so-called Basmak movement in Central Asia lasted until 1936. And now we can say that the Basmaks were no gangsters, they were people who were fighting for the freedom of their nation.

The talk at the time of the formation of the USSR was exclusively of the voluntary nature of membership of this union.

It is hardly likely that such analogies occurred to the deputies of the State Duma who voted to denounce the Belovezhskaya agreements. We can only guess at the result they were aiming for in adopting this, it may be said, provocative document. It seems to me personally that the Communists initiated this decree for one purpose—to exacerbate the situation prior to the presidential elections.

The opposition sees that the Russian executive is interested in the integration of the CIS countries. The rapprochement of Russia and Belarus is proceeding the most actively, although contradictorily, good relations are shaping up with Kazakhstan, Georgia, and Ukraine (I am hoping in this respect for the success of B. Yeltsin's visit to Kiev also), and, generally, contacts are strengthening with practically all the former Union republics. Seeing this, the Communists are adopting the decision to exacerbate the situation, evoke distrust of Russia in the near abroad and throughout the world, and portray our country as an "evil empire," which sets at nought the right of others to sovereignty and independence. Those who voted for the denunciation are assuring everyone of their noble intentions here, of course. But however the Communists may now attempt to assuage the Russian and international communities and to downplay the significance of the document they have adopted, it is already working against integration, more, many countries now have a splendid excuse for the speediest membership of NATO, and this bloc will, consequently, move closer to Russia's borders. President of Poland Kwasniewski's statement that he does not accept the security guarantees offered by Yevgeniy Primakov and will strive to ensure that his country become a member of NATO as quickly as possible is, as they say, only the beginning.

It is staggering, but this whole mess was prepared by people who shout the loudest about their patriotism. As far as the Belovezhskaya agreements themselves and the attempts to place the entire blame for the collapse of the Union on the present president are concerned, there is something of which I would like to remind the critics. The USSR was pulled apart by the CPSU. And this process began long before Belovezhskaya, what is more. The independence of Lithuania was proclaimed in March 1990. Following free elections in Georgia, this republic also proclaimed independence. And so it went. Gorbachev, worried by this trend, prepared an agreement on the creation of a kind of USSR affording the republics greater autonomy. I believe that the signing of this document, which was to have taken place on 20 August 1991, would not have stopped the breakup. But this was movement to preserve the USSR, all the same. What prevented it? The State Emergency Committee. And who constituted the State Emergency Committee? The most orthodox Communists. And what then? In August Ukraine and other republics declared independence. The December Belovezhskaya agreements were still far off. Each of them began to create its own central bank here. The Communists are giving no reminders of this. The single currency system had caved in before Belovezhskaya. The Supreme Soviet and the old government ceased to exist in October. I myself was I. Silayev's first deputy in a strange, by no means Union, organization. It was called the Committee for Operational Management of the Economy. It was not even said of which country.

I will go further. The Belovezhskaya agreements, in my opinion, were useful. They forestalled a Yugoslav version of the country's disintegration. But the USSR was not Yugoslavia, the bloodshed here would have been far greater.

But the Communists are reluctant to recall any of this. Populism is now dearer to them than the truth. And, I fear, dearer than Russia.

Russia: Wreckage of Missing Il-76 Transport Plane Found

LD0804053796 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0530 GMT 8 Apr 96

[By Sergey Borovkov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] PETROPAVLOVSK-KAMCHATSKIY April 8 (Itar- Tass) — The wreckage of an Il-76 transportation plane, which was reported missing during a flight over Kamchatka Peninsula on April 5, were found at 04.21 Moscow time (00.21 GMT) on Monday in the area of Nachikinskoye Lake, 41 kilometres from Yelizovo airport, a spokesman at the Kamchatka Regional Civil Defence Centre has told Itar-Tass.

The plane's fragments were spotted on the slope of Volcano Vachkazhech at an altitude of 500 metres by the crew of a Mi-8 helicopter of the Kamchatka Airlines company.

A rescue expeition is being arranged for a detailed survey of the wreckage area.

"Staff members of the Far Eastern Transport Procurator's Office have left by air for the wreckage area on Monday," Regional Transport Procurator Valeriy Balyaba has told Anatoliy Vostokov, Khabarovsk correspondent of Itar-Tass.

"The search helicopter crew reported in a radio message that they found the plane's engines and large fragments spread over a wide area. They saw that the fuselage was fractured and considerably damaged," Balyaba said.

The procurator believes that it is so far too early to speak about causes of the tragedy. However, it is not ruled out that the plane ran out of fuel. The plane's crew deviated from the route and was flying to Yelizovo airport in the shortest possible way. The Far Eastern Transport Procurator's Office has instituted criminal proceedings in view of the air crash.

Military & Nuclear Issues

Russia: Yeltsin Aide Satarov Has Meeting at Defense Ministry

MM0804100996 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 6 Apr 96 p 1

[Report by Vitaliy Strugovets: "All Forces Must Be Consolidated for the Good of Russia. Meeting at Defense Ministry With Presidential Aide"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A series of meetings with representatives of presidential structures is under way at the Russian Federation Defense Ministry. A few days ago generals and officers from Russian Federation Defense Ministry central command and control organs and branches of the Armed Forces and representatives of military research institutes and higher educational establishments were addressed by Georgiy Satarov, the Russian Federation president's aide for political questions.

The political system under which we lived for many years, he stressed at the very start of the discussion, lacked an important function of any organism — a desire to adapt. The economic and technological crisis, which is extremely important for the Army, is due to precisely that fact. It is, incidentally, no secret that one of the fundamental reasons why perestroyka originally began was the dissatisfaction felt by the Army and the military-industrial complex at the technological lag.

Today we must move on to a system based on different principles. This extremely powerful reorganization of the state, public, and social organism cannot be painless. That is regrettably an objective reality. A law of nature, if you like. And what began in 1992 is not a scientific experiment, as some observers claim, but a practical, inevitable revival, which any sensible person would have undertaken given the realities. The features of the current phase are that the mechanisms needed to extricate the country from crisis have already begun to operate whether we like it or not.

Elections are the main problem of the day. Their main distinguishing feature is extreme contradictoriness and the split in society. There are indeed always divisions in politics. But in any society there are always universal values which unite people. Our trouble is that we have not yet found the unifying social factors and universal values to stabilize society.

What is the solution?

It is proposed by Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin in his election platform, which will soon be made public. In it the president sets out his position, his credo, and his view of Russia's problems. Forces can be consolidated around it.

Then the president's aide for political questions spoke in detail about the special features of the current election campaign, its strategy, ideology, and overall concept. He devoted a great deal of attention to the problem of Chechnya.

A question which worries all servicemen was the heart of the discussion: Does the president as supreme commander in chief know the real state of affairs in troop units with their tremendous arrears in respect of municipal services, imperfect training and combat base, and problems with material and clothing supply?

To be completely frank, Georgiy Satarov admitted, the president is not of course fully aware of the situation in each troop unit. That is unrealistic and impossible. But the fact is that Boris Nikolayevich does not receive information about the state of affairs in the Army only from the Defense Ministry. Let me stress, Georgiy Satarov pointed out, that the principle of the president's work is to receive information via many channels. And another rule is that the head of state is always issued with specific illustrations, letters, and tables along with the summarized information. A desire to grasp the fine points is a feature of Boris Nikolayevich's character; he is never satisfied with general data.

Russia: Commanders Reminded of Electioneering Ban in Army Units

LD0804102396 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0905 GMT 8 Apr 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Boris Kipkeyev]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Moscow, 8 Apr (Itar-Tass) — From today, visits of deputies, representatives from various parties, and public organizations to military units, formations, and other institutions of the Defense Ministry will be restricted. This demand is outlined in a directive issued today by General Mikhail Kolesnikov, chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation. The directive draws the attention of the leadership of military districts and commanders of the arms of the service the demand of Article 18 of the Law of the Russian Federation on defense prohibiting any form of political agitation, including preelection campaigning, on the territory of units and formations of the Armed Forces and the Navy. The document also stresses the need to strengthen educational work among personnel of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation on the federal election legislation.

A Defense Ministry source told an ITAR-TASS correspondent that this directive was issued because there have been instances of deputies of various ranks in various regions of Russia using their status to ask garrison commanders to allow them to speak to servicemen. [passage omitted: army commanders questioned the legality of demands for electioneering in army units]

Russia: Edict on Primakov Appointment to Nuclear Security Forum

MM0504140296 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA Weekend Edition in Russian 5 Apr 96 p 3

[Russian President's Edict No. 468 "Questions of the Organizational Committee on the Preparation and Holding of the Meeting on Nuclear Security Problems in Moscow" signed by President Yeltsin in Moscow on 1 April 1996]

[FBIS Translated Text] In amendment of Russian Federation President's Edict No. 1279 of 20 December 1995 "On the Preparation and Holding of the Meeting on Nuclear Security Problems in Moscow," I decree that:

1. O.I. Lobov, secretary of the Russian Federation Security Council, is relieved of his duties as chairman of the organizational committee for the preparation and holding in Moscow of the meeting of heads of states and governments of Britain, Italy, Canada, Russia, the United States, France, the FRG, and Japan on nuclear security problems at his request and that Ye.M. Primakov, Russian Federation foreign minister, is appointed chairman of the said committee.

2. This edict goes into force on the day of its signing.

[signed] B. Yeltsin, president of the Russian Federation

[dated] The Kremlin, Moscow, 1 April 1996
Edict No. 468

Russia: Vice Admiral Grishanov Discusses Scrapping Nuclear Submarines

LD0704170296 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 0630 GMT 7 Apr 96

[Interview with Vice Admiral Valeriy Grishanov, deputy commander in chief of the Russian Navy in charge of shipbuilding and armaments, by correspondent Andrey Rostotskiy; place and date not given; from the "Vesti" newscast — live or recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Rostotskiy] The year 1995 can be called the anniversary year — 50 years ago mankind experienced the effects of nuclear weapons for the first time. [passage omitted]

[Rostotskiy, talking to Grishanov] Valeriy Vasilyevich, what number of nuclear submarines have been ndecommissioned to date and in what condition are they?

[Grishanov] To date, about 150 Russian Navy submarines have been decommissioned. Some of these are being dismantled at the plants of the Northern and Pacific Fleets, but the majority remain at their bases waiting to be dismantled.

[Rostotskiy] Can you tell me, where exactly are they, where are they being kept?

[Grishanov] In the Northern Fleet they are mainly kept in the areas where combat submarines are based. There are special facilities created for them and some of the crew personnel are employed to ensure the safety of the submarines due to be dismantled. I should also say that this is a very complex problem from the viewpoint of finding personnel, because at the moment we are using Navy servicemen. Another complex problem is that most of the submarines still have their radioactive reactor sections on board, which naturally can be quite dangerous.

[Rostotskiy] Tell me, please, what is the current situation with storage facilities for the nuclear waste from these nuclear submarines?

[Grishanov] This is also a difficult problem. I should say it straight away — and, maybe, not everyone knows this — that the products that come from dismantling of submarines include the radioactive sections and, naturally, the liquid and the solid radioactive waste that comes as the result of the dismantling process. This is why such storage facilities exist both in the Northern and the Pacific Fleets. Unfortunately, the country-wide problem of regional dumping sites has not yet been solved. These sites should be depositories of the main bulk of the waste from dismantled submarines.

[Rostotskiy] What in your opinion should be the best solutions for dismantling the submarines?

[Grishanov] I should say that generally some people have a rather simplified understanding of what the dismantling of nuclear submarines is about. This is a problem for the state. Every day Admiral Gromov, the Navy commander in chief, and I address this problem many times. Apart from this, Andrey Afanasyevich Kokoshin, the first deputy defense minister, and Colonel General Anatoliy Sitnov, chief of the Main Directorate for Armaments, are addressing this problem daily. The problem lies not just in dismantling the submarines, taking them apart at our plants. This is also the problem for science and research work, because what we potentially need is the complete dismantling of the submarines, so that virtually no remains of nuclear fuel and nuclear sections are left behind. This is also a problem of creating and properly using all the existing storage facilities for liquid and solid nuclear waste and setting up regional dumping sites in the country. This is also a problem of removing the radioactive sections and transporting them, the problem of their processing at the Ministry of Atomic Energy enterprises. This is the problem of storing the reactor sections, because the question of how to dismantle them fully have not yet been considered.

In other words, there are many aspects to the problem. And it must be solved in its entirety. I can say that this year alone there were two government sessions devoted to the subject. They were chaired by Oleg Soskovets, the first deputy prime minister. The questions of solving this problem were very actively discussed, including their financial side. One thing cannot be separated from the other. We cannot pull apart a submarine without solving the question of transporting or storing the radioactive waste. In other words, everything has to be considered as a total.

Generally, the Navy would be very happy if every decommissioned submarine is taken away from us together with all the accompanying problems. But since we have to do it this way, we must do as the Ministry of Defense says, with sufficient financing to allow us to solve this problem as a complex. [passage omitted]

Federal Assembly

Russia: Duma Postpones Decision on Yeltsin Bill on USSR Vote

LD0504185696 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1746 GMT 5 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 5 (INTERFAX) — The Russian State Duma, parliament's lower chamber, Friday failed to take a decision on the draft law introduced by the Russian president in response to the Duma's March 15 vote to denounce the 1991 Belovezhskaya Accords which disbanded the USSR and founded the CIS.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin submitted a draft law "On ensuring the stability of Russia's legal system and confirming Russia's international obligations" to the State Duma as a legislative initiative.

The Duma spent two hours debating the draft law but failed to make a specific decision. The legislature's lower chamber will reconsider the presidential initiative at its next plenary session on Wednesday, April 10.

Yeltsin proposes in the draft law that the Duma confirm the juridical effect of laws and other legal documents issued in Russia after December 12, 1991, as well as Russia's obligations under international treaties and accords.

The president has to propose that the law remove the present legal uncertainty, Yeltsin's representative in the State Duma Aleksandr Kotenkov said at the session. The Duma's March 15 resolutions "in fact raised the question of Russia's status as a subject of international law after reinstating USSR sovereignty on its territory," Kotenkov said.

The Duma's committees and representatives of all its factions will have to prepare a draft of a corresponding Duma resolution before April 10.

The Duma's committees on Legislation, International Affairs and CIS Affairs earlier recommended that deputies reject the presidential legislative motion.

Russia: Duma Rejects Draft Statement Criticizing Yeltsin

LD0504192196 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1746 GMT 5 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 5 (INTERFAX) - The State Duma rejected Friday a draft statement prepared on the initiative of the Popular Rule faction on "inadmissible comments" about some of the deputies made by President Boris Yeltsin.

In the draft statement the Duma proposed that Yeltsin apologize to Popular Rule leader Nikolay Ryzhkov and Communist Party faction members Anatoliy Lukyanov and Valentin Varennikov for saying that the deputies "belong in the Matrosskaya Tishina prison, not in the Duma." The comments were made during Yeltsin's April 4 meetings with voters in the Belgorod region.

The Duma voted on the draft statement twice, and both times it received the support of 216 deputies, remaining 10 votes short of the required number. Not a single vote was cast against the draft, which made parliamentary observers conclude that a number of deputies decided not to vote on the issue.

Russia: Duma Approves Deputies To Work On Chechnya Commission

LD0504134896 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1137 GMT 5 Apr 96

[By ITAR-TASS parliamentary correspondent Pavel Kuznetsov]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 5 April (ITAR-TASS) — The State Duma today approved a list of deputies who will work in the state commission which is being set up in accordance with the plan for a peaceful settlement in Chechnya proposed by Russian President Boris Yeltsin.

The list includes: Gennadiy Seleznev, chairman of the House; Vladimir Zorin, member of the Our Home is Russia faction and chairman of the Committee for Nationalities' Affairs; Nikolay Bezborodov, member of the Power to the People group of deputies and deputy chairman of the Defense Committee; and also Anatoliy Kotkov, member of the Russian Regions group of deputies.

Russia: Duma Ratifies Baykonur Complex Security Accord

LD0504175296 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1634 GMT 5 Apr 96

[By Igor Zhukov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 5 (ITAR-TASS) — The State Duma on Friday ratified a Russian-Kazakh agreement on cooperation and interaction to ensure security of the Baykonur complex.

The Federal Security Service officials stressed the importance of the ratification of the agreement which envisages ensuring Russia's national security.

Regional Affairs

Russia: Yeltsin Belgorod Oblast Tour Viewed

MM0504162396 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 5 Apr 96 p 1

[Report by Viktor Chemodurov: "Reforms in Progress Wherever People Want Them — Boris Yeltsin Has Seen This for Himself During His Visit to Belgorod Oblast "]

[FBIS Translated Text] The head of state has devoted two whole days to getting to know for himself the state of affairs in Belgorod Oblast, although his schedule has been extremely tight of late. You can already deduce from this the great significance he attaches to the federal authorities' reform efforts and their constructive work in the regions. In short, this is not just a presidential election swing but a professional working visit by the head of state to a region which is both interesting and instructive in many respects.

Thanks to smart, energetic work carried out by the local administration, headed by Governor Yevgeniy Savchenko, but also the rich popular traditions, Belgorod Oblast today is a successful region measured in terms of both the Central Chernozem belt, where it is located, and — by certain yardsticks — the country as a whole. Reforms are progressing far more successfully here than in many other Russian oblasts, and people are aware of the positive results of transformations changing life for the better.

Laying a wreath at the site of the eternal flame was the first item on Boris Yeltsin's itinerary in Belgorod. Flowers were laid at the foot of a memorial where 108 soldiers who died fighting to liberate the city from the fascists are buried. Over 30,000 soldiers in all died during the liberation of Belgorod. The president expressed his satisfaction that much is being done in Belgorod to commemorate the soldiers' exploit during the Great Patriotic War.

After paying his respects to the martial past of Belgorod's sacred soil at the eternal flame and the Salient of Fire diorama, Boris Nikolayevich traveled to the oblast center's South Market — one of five constructed to date by the oblast fund for the support of individual housing construction in the countryside.

It must be said that Boris Yeltsin, who recently signed the Edict "On Elaborating the 'Homeowner' Federal Targeted Program," was pretty well informed about the progress of the Belgorod construction experiment — Governor Savchenko's brainchild — long before his visit. The authorities here have been able to provide soft loans over the last two years for the construction of good-quality houses for around 5,000 rural families. And the loans will be repaid over 10 years not by money but by agricultural produce. Back then Boris Yeltsin appended to one of the documents he received on this the instruction that the Belgorod experiment should be extended throughout Russia. On his instruction, the government recently allocated the oblast 50 billion rubles [R] out of the federal budget precisely to support this good initiative.

Yeltsin could now sense for himself the joy owning one's own home gives people. In Belgorodskiy Rayon's "Mayskiy" settlement he deliberately dropped in to see a peasant family in their new home, where he was greeted, of course, with true Russian cordiality. In the president's own words, what he saw merely confirmed the correctness of the line now determined by him whereby the development of individual construction work be promoted in every possible way by the granting of the required funds to people on preferential terms. The organs of authority at local level must make this a priority issue and keep it under constant supervision, he observed.

The president also visited the Kolkhoz named for Frunze, which has been headed since 1959 without a break by the talented production organizer Vasiliy Gorin. People here know how to put in a good day's work, and their own chairman sets them a good example. And that is why they lead a normal life and earn decent wages which, together with social payments, come to over R1 million per month on average.

Having enjoyed a friendly meeting with the peasants, the president flew off to the city of Gubkin to see the miners of the Lebedinskiy mining and enrichment combine. Anatoliy Kalashnikov, the general director of this iron ore enterprise, which is the best in Russia, conducted the head of state around the enterprise, introduced him to miners, and showed him the Church of the Transfiguration, which is under construction, that symbol of our spiritual revival. There the head of state saw the real results of the reforms, the social changes, and also the "huge pile of plans" which the collective is already implementing. From which the president will certainly have gained the sense that the Lebedinskiy miners have under the reforms begun to live better than before.

However, everything tells you that Boris Yeltsin has not come to Belgorod Oblast merely to have his morale boosted. Studying the most pressing problems affecting the region has been the real point of his work during the visit. And they have featured at every meeting with the inhabitants of Belgorod and will be the subject of detailed discussion at a board meeting of the Chernozem Oblasts' Economic Collaboration Association to be held in the evening, when this newspaper will already have gone to press.

Boris Yeltsin also reported that an edict to compensate people for savings deposits which have depreciated during the reforms is under preparation. He intends to sign the relevant document in approximately one week's time. "We will make up for the depreciation so that Russian depositors can be sure that they will eventually get their money back," the head of state said. He made clear that the payments will be phased in. "The older people are the more quickly they will be paid the money, while younger ones will receive it later," Boris Yeltsin explained, stressing that it is "the state's duty" to make up the investments.

The president stated in Belgorod that he has "several high-powered programs designed to develop the south of Russia and the country's agro-industrial complex as a whole."

The president's swing through the Chernozem region continues.

Russia: Yeltsin Meets People of Belgorod Region

LD0504160996 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1544 GMT 5 Apr 96

[By Andrey Shtorkh]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BELGOROD, April 5 (ITAR-TASS) — It is hardly possible to report with full accuracy the innumerable dialogues, exchanges of witty, frank and free remarks between Russian President Boris Yeltsin and inhabitants of the Belgorod region where he spent two days.

Wherever the President went, hundreds and even thousands of people were there to greet him and, situation allowing, pester him with questions, stories and quips.

What is most difficult to convey in writing is the tone of those exchanges, lively, full of humour and mutual confidence. Here is part of a verbatim record of Boris Yeltsin's conversation with workers of the Oskol metallurgical plant's construction and household equipment division.

The President rebuked the plant management for insufficient attention to housing construction and advised the workers to benefit from the "Own house" programme.

Yeltsin: Well, you don't build much housing, a mere 30,000 square meters were built by the plant with its own resources. I was at the Stoylenskiy ore-enrichment factory today, they have built just as much — 30,000. But your plant is mush larger. Why don't you build individual houses, especially for your children, sons and daughters. I signed a decree a short time ago concerning the programme "Own house." You can now go ahead.

A worker: Is there enough for all?

Yeltsin: The thing is that the loan is issued interest-free, first of all. Secondly, you repay it over 25 years. Earlier, three years was the term, by I signed for 25 years. Every man can earn enough over 25 years to pay for his own house. Go ahead, build your homes. We have so much land in Russia. In France or Germany you look around and see a house, another house, and another house... But we have space — we can build, we have materials, we have timber, we have bricks.

The plant manager tried to explain away the President's rebuke but Yeltsin interrupted:

"I tell you don't build enough, and you do it badly. Every man must build his own house which must become his own property on his own land. One can raise cattle, for example, and then sell it for beef. Or one can raise a pig. Why not? Moscow Mayor Yuriy Luzhkov has two cows."

A worker: On his balcony, or what? (laughter).

Yeltsin: No, not on a balcony, of course. But he does have two cows.

A worker: And who looks after them?

Yeltsin: His wife. No one else. He has no servants, no help. But I get milk from him. Can you imagine it, I go to him myself to fetch milk for my grandson. He is already five months old. No, six months already. Must be. No time to count. Well, anyway he is a good, sturdy boy, he is. No need for the mother's tit. (all laugh).

The conversation turned to what one needs to be happy.

A worker: What does a man need to be absolutely happy?

Yeltsin: What does a man need? A good wife, I think. (laughter, applause).

The worker: I have one.

Yeltsin: A good job.

The worker: Mine is fine.

Yeltsin: A house of your own.

The worker: And a good pay.

Yeltsin: And a good pay.

The worker: We should have started with the pay.

Yeltsin: I think the wages will keep growing all the same. The prices will keep rising but just a little. We must keep this divergence in mind all the time.

Manager: Boris Nikolayevich, we have been raising wages faster than the state-owned enterprises for more than a year. These folks have been telling you that every one among them gets more than a million roubles.

Yeltsin: No, Aleksey Alekseyevich, you must not look down on people. A million is just enough to meet every man's vital needs. Getting a million does not make one a millionaire. You are applying an old yardstick. Now it is an average wage. Incidentally, not much less than the President gets. But incidentally, I get much less than your manager.

A worker: But you have much more to care about.

Yeltsin: All Russia is my care. His head does not ache because of Chechnya, but mine is bursting because of it.

Russia: Yeltsin Discusses Belgorod Region Social Problems

LD0504141696 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1249 GMT 5 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] PROKHOROVKA, Belgorod region, April 5 (INTERFAX) — President Yeltsin devoted the second, closing day of his visit to the Belgorod region to the social problems facing the region and the country in general. They were central to Yeltsin's meetings with industrial managers and local people on the streets and at the sites of monuments, an Interfax correspondent reports.

When he visited the Oskol electric metallurgical combine and a number of other enterprises, Yeltsin met with local people to discuss prices, wages, pensions and housing. He also explained his plan for a peace settlement plan in Chechnya.

Yeltsin pointed to the need to solve problems connected with people's living standards as soon as possible. He promised that in the near future, prices would grow more slowly than wages and said that he made that conclusion on the basis of accurate statistics.

Many questions were about the timely payment of wages. People thanked Yeltsin for his efforts along these lines.

Several questions concerned housing. Yeltsin dwelt at length on the government's housing program, which is to take effect shortly. Russian people will have the chance to build their own relatively inexpensive housing on credits extended for a term of ten to 25 years. Yeltsin hopes that this would help young people solve their housing problems faster.

As he persuaded his audience at the Oskol metallurgical combine that the government's private housing program had a future, Yeltsin said: "The Mayor of Moscow Luzhkov, for instance, has a house in the country. His household has two cows and the mayor's wife looks after these cows. And I sometimes buy milk from him for my little grandson."

In the afternoon, Yeltsin toured memorial sites in the Belgorod region near the community of Prokhorovka, the site of World War II's biggest tank battle.

Yeltsin visited the memorial bell-tower and the church built near the legendary Prokhorovka field, the actual site of the battle. He talked with local residents and

World War II veterans, who live in the home for the aged on the church's premises.

As Yeltsin left, local people wished him success in the presidential election.

Russia: Yeltsin Addresses Leaders in Belgorod

LD0504141596 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1249 GMT 5 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] PROKHOROVKA, Belgorod region, April 5 (INTERFAX) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin said that a gradual improvement in living standards is a top priority of his government.

Yeltsin's address to the regional and local leaders in Belgorod Friday concentrated on the continuation of reform and on social issues.

"I am greatly impressed by what I saw here. I am convinced that those who spread myths about a 'red belt' here, about rejection of the reform in the region, are wrong," he said.

Yeltsin strongly disagreed with those who advocate printing "empty" money in order to solve economic problems. "As long as I am president this will not happen in Russia," he said. He explained that the printing of money would result in the most acute shortages, and "no rationing would save the situation."

Yeltsin spoke at length about the need to pay wages, pensions and benefits on time. "This problem is largely man-made," he said and emphasized that it was made possible by the connivance of the controlling agencies. "The money was invested and reinvested by commercial structures. This is robbery," Yeltsin said.

Funds for investments in the country's economy exist he said. "Funds, large funds, for investment in production also exist abroad," but foreign investors are awaiting the results of the presidential elections before making their decision, he said. "The presidential elections will be decisive for the Russian economy as well as politics," Yeltsin declared.

The integration of Commonwealth of Independent States member nations was a major theme of his address.

Yeltsin called on the leaders of the black soil belt regions, which include the Belgorod region bordering on Ukraine, to cooperate with Ukraine and "restore economic ties with it on a new basis."

Integration is the fastest with Belarus while with other CIS member nations it is slower, he said.

"Not everything depends on Russia. If our neighbors wish a closer rapprochement, we will meet them halfway. If everything depended on Russia, the integration would be much deeper now," Yeltsin said. "We [in Russia] want integration to be mutually beneficial. We help [our partner] as much as we can, but to take on the whole burden of other people's problems would be too much," he continued.

Yeltsin believed that it is too early to say now what will happen to the Russian-Belarusian Community in five years time, or whether it would turn into a federation or a confederation. An agreement on the Community was signed in Moscow on April 2.

Russia: Yeltsin Approves Belgorod Steel Development Program

LD0504154596 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0843 GMT 5 Apr 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vitaliy Ilgov]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Belgorod, 5 April (ITAR-TASS) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin gave the "green light" to implementation of a targeted, integrated program for the development of Belgorod region's mining and metallurgical industry. He did so after today's visit to the Staryy Oskol electro-metallurgical combine, one of the region's joint-stock companies.

The head of state, who arrived in Belgorod yesterday, is spending a second day familiarizing himself with the situation in the region.

The president was pleasantly surprised by what he discovered during his visit to the combine. Not only has the number of employees not fallen, it has actually risen by 2,400 to a total of 20,000 at the present time. Average wages here exceed a million roubles. [passage omitted]

The enterprise is thinking of commissioning new production facilities, including a 350 mill. The mill's construction has been held up for various reasons. If this production line comes into operation, the combine will be capable of producing up to a million tonnes of rolled metal a year. The combine has been planning for a long time to modernize its 700 mill, which would significantly increase its capacity.

The combine did not ask the president for money. Its fundamental concern lies elsewhere. The implementation of projects is being inhibited by a flawed taxation and credit policy and the "lawlessness" of monopoly organizations, above all power supply utilities and the railroads, which are literally strangling the country's economy by raising charges.

So, the president signed a decree on the implementation of a targeted, integrated program for development of the region's mining and metallurgical industry. Specialists regard this as a very important move, which will benefit the country as well as Belgorod Region. Real prerequisites are being created for the industry to serve the national economy more effectively.

Russia: Yeltsin Looks 'Somewhat Weary' After Belgorod Visit

MM0504185996 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 6 Apr 96 pp 1-2

[Report by Aleksandr Gamov: "Yeltsin Sets Off To Meet the People"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Belgorod Oblast — "How is your health?" your KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA correspondent asked Boris Yeltsin.

"My health is excellent," the president replied cheerily.

If we are talking about the launch of Boris Yeltsin's full-scale presidential election campaign, we should start with his trip to Belgorod Oblast, which ended Friday [5 April]. Boris Nikolayevich, who has usually mixed with high-ranking officials, may not have seen such a huge number of ordinary people around him in the past few years. Either the security service has had a rethink or the candidate himself has.... Only Yeltsin has once again become very accessible, as he was in the past.

Inhabitants knew in advance of his route in Belgorod, Staryy Oskol, Prokhorovka, and so on. However, the route could be worked out without difficulty from the rows of police.

There were people everywhere. Yeltsin constantly stopped his car, causing his guards plenty of hassle. Old women with crumpled petitions and "unemployed workers" with babies in their arms forced their way toward him.... One journalist tormented Presidential Press Secretary Sergey Medvedev: How, he said, was it possible to organize and orchestrate everything so skillfully? Had the Kremlin thought of "staging" anything, it was probably not rows of people with complaints.

According to Boris Yeltsin himself, during his two-day visit to Belgorod Oblast he had dozens of meetings on city and village streets, possibly "at the expense" of the traditional contacts with the local elite. The president admitted that he liked "people's characters and mood": Despite the fact that not all of them have "enough money," they are "not downcast and they are hoping for better things." "Everyone whom I have met says that they will back Yeltsin," the president remarked with some pride.

Along with the "black attache case" the president was followed by a "white" one containing papers. During his trip the edict "On Priority Measures of State Support for Small Business in the Russian Federation" was signed; this year loans of 500 billion rubles have been earmarked for this purpose.

Naturally, the subject of Chechnya gave the president no peace. As for Boris Nikolayevich's latest ideas on this subject, here is one of them: "The small gangs terrorizing the population will now mainly be dealt with by the Chechen police. Armed forces from the peaceful areas will be withdrawn to the Chechen border. They will remain there: Is that not enough?"

Boris Nikolayevich's suggestion that Russians should each plant a tree during presidential election year sounded touching. Indeed, how many may be felled?

Yesterday Boris Nikolayevich spent around two hours touring the workshops of the Oskol Electrometallurgical Combine. He constantly asked what the metallurgists earn.

There was also talk about life: "The main thing in life," Boris Nikolayevich said philosophically, "is a good wife, a good job, and a good wage. Am I right?" The workers agreed. The president added: "And your own home." He urged everyone to take out a 25-year interest-free loan, as envisaged in his recent edict, and build their own home. "Children are growing up and there is no housing for young people.... And there are no prospects. Take out a loan and build a house." The workers promised to think about it.

In conclusion Yeltsin warned them: "If we give up market reforms and freeze prices, there will be no means of paying wages. And the shelves in the stores will be empty. We cannot go back to that. Since we have embarked on the path of reform, let us finish the job so that everyone can live a good, free, and comfortable life." "Let us do that," the workers concurred.

....No matter how Boris Nikolayevich tried to be cheerful, by evening he did nonetheless look somewhat weary. However, journalists, exhausted by pursuing him, were also dead on their feet. I seized the opportunity to ask Yeltsin what he now finds most difficult in the election campaign. He thought a while and then said: "The most difficult thing now is to drive around the whole of Russia."

Economic Issues

Russia: Yeltsin Decree Emphasizes Support for Small Businesses

LD0604182896 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1538 GMT 6 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 6 (INTERFAX) - Support of small-sized business is a major task of the state policy to create favorable conditions for developing Russian citizens' initiative, Russian President Boris Yeltsin said in a relevant decree forwarded to Interfax Saturday.

The decree entitled "On Top-Priority Measures of State Support of Small-Sized Business in Russia" instructs the Russian Government to set aside 200 billion rubles to the Chernozemye region, central Russia, for this purpose. In addition, the government will annually guarantee foreign investments in small-sized business in Russia for at least $200 million.

Yeltsin asked the government to hold talks with the World Bank on using a part of its privatization loan to support small-sized business in Russia. The State Employment Fund will set aside at least 40 percent of its assets to create new jobs at small-sized enterprises.

Banks and insurance companies servicing small-sized businesses will enjoy tax incentives, while regional organs of power will set aside at least 0.5 percent of their annual budgets for the same purpose.

Russia: Bankruptcy Chief Accuses Auditing Chamber of Bias

MK0604071196 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 5 Apr 96 p 3

[Report by Andrey Bagrov: "Administration Thinks the Auditors Exceeded Their Powers"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The first to react to findings of the Auditing Chamber, was Petr Mostovoy, director of the Federal Bankruptcy Administration [FUDN]. A report compiled by his administration contests the auditors' findings; it also concludes that the auditors were prejudiced and that the Auditing Chamber exceeded its powers.

The Auditing Chamber has exceeded its power — is the keynote of the document drawn up by FUDN. Most of FUDN's objections are related to spheres that lie outside the Auditing Chamber's jurisdiction. In particular, the law on "The Auditing Chamber" which regulates its operation, says that the Chamber shall have the right to monitor "the effectiveness and wisdom of spending state funds and the use of state property," whereas privatization and bankruptcy procedures are state property management functions. Even so, FUDN specialists thought it necessary to counter the accusations of the Auditing Chamber. The most interesting part of the rather extensive report — which is replete with references to current legislation (there is no doubt that FUDN specialists are conversant in it) as well as with statistics — is its [references] to the debates surrounding the AO [joint-stock company] "Rybinskiye Motory." To quote Petr Mostovoy, the head of the auditing commission, Veniamin Sokolov, was for some reason "especially" interested in this problem. Therefore, accusations of FUDN's illegal actions with regard to the AO "Rybinskiye Motory" are seen by the administration's chiefs as the "logical outcome."

FUDN, for its part, once again explains that the "wisdom of recognizing the AO "Rybinskiye Motory" as insolvent was confirmed by three stages of the court of arbitration." Claims that the enterprise became solvent again, and that it produced statements of assets and liabilities for six and nine months, hold no water legally speaking, because "irregularities and deviations from the bookkeeping practices [currently] in force" are found in these documents. Furthermore, the Chamber's claims that Moscow's court of arbitration annulled the State Committee on the Administration of State Property's instruction No. 1722 is a piece of "misinformation." Therefore, FUDN thinks that the federally owned block of shares (37 percent) should have been sold before December of 1995. However, the competitive bidding was disrupted by the deliberate actions of the joint-stock company's leadership, along with those of some Auditing Chamber officials." As a result, the administration believes, direct damage was done to the federal budget (tens of billions of rubles were lost), with the enterprise losing $162.5 million. At the present time, FUDN contends, production has all but ground to a halt, with not more than 15 percent of the workers left on the payroll. And they have not been paid their wages since last November.

Rather curious are FUDN's counter arguments with regard to the accusations of management-support cost overruns all along the line, and of spending money, accrued from selling debtor enterprises, in other than designated ways. FUDN argues (backing its view with references to Finance Ministry regulatory documents and presidential edicts) that the auditors took no account of the cost involved in fixing wages to the rate of inflation and of an increase in the administration's staff. As a result, a sum that was 100.5 billion rubles short of what was actually needed was provided from the [state] budget in 1994. The shortfall was partially repaid from some other sources and partially from the [state] budget, but only in April of 1995, and then not in full. As for the temporarily free money invested in certificates of deposit, FUDN is convinced that this sort of investment of money is not commercial activity. Otherwise, all those citizens with deposits with fixed periods in Sberbank of Russia would have to be recognized as engaged in commercial activity.

It is necessary to point out that a detailed analysis of the Auditing Chamber's conclusion provided FUDN specialists with grounds to see, in the actions of some of its auditors, the elements of such crimes as libel, forgery in public office, and of exceeding their powers. This provided the basis for the retaliatory actions of FUDN which, according to Petr Mostovoy, forwarded the requisite materials to the General Prosecutor's Office.

Russia: Property Committee Agrees With Watchdog Commission Charges

MK0604071096 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 5 Apr 96 p 3

[Report by Yelena Medvedeva: "The State Property Committee Recognizes Everything Except the Budget Revenue Target"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Accounting Chamber has submitted its official complaints to the agencies overseeing privatization. A statement on this was made at a Duma press conference yesterday by Veniamin Sokolov, chief auditor. Predictably, Aleksandr Kazakov, deputy premier and head of the State Property Committee [GKI], who was present at the press conference, confirmed that all of the charges by the Accounting Chamber are basically legitimate. Even so, journalists failed to find out anything new about the future of loans-for-shares auctions or of Petr Mostovoy and Alfred Kokh, GKI deputy chairmen, whose cases have gone to the General Prosecutor's Office.

"It is necessary to move from mass privatization to a balanced process of transformation of ownership forms, taking into account the strategic interests of the country and its people" — such is the bombastic conclusion of a two-month probe by the Accounting Chamber. Veniamin Sokolov hastened to add that this does not involve any plans to reverse the process, that is, to go ahead with nationalization. According to him, privatization has followed "a misguided course, and everything that could be violated was violated." Privatization became illegal as soon as the Supreme Soviet in 1993 passed the law "On Privatization," which was afterward often contravened by both presidential edicts and government decrees. Sokolov believes that the main task now is to streamline the legislative base.

Aleksandr Kazakov reacted to the Accounting Chamber's statement calmly. He summed it up by formulating seven main requirements for the GKI, the Russian Federation Property Fund, and the Federal Bankruptcy Administration. The first is tight control over the registration of all documents at the Ministry of Justice. Incidentally, nonobservance of this requirement led the Accounting Chamber to deem shares-for-loans auctions null and void. In spite of this, the GKI head is absolutely sure that it is difficult to prove the illegality of such auctions. The second is to work out agreements with sectoral ministries. Kazakov said that the president has "an edict defining clear-cut privatization criteria" lying on his desk ready for signing which will regulate these relations. The third and fourth requirements concern the administration of state property and a tightening of measures to inventory it. The fifth and sixth points deal with oversight of Federal Property Fund activity. Yet all of the aforementioned, according to Kazakov, "pales" before item seven: budget targets for privatization revenue. "You are all normal, sensible people," the GKI head addressed the reporters. "Just think, where from can I take these 12.7 trillion [rubles] envisioned in the budget?" (It is noteworthy that a month ago Kazakov had a weak hope that this headache could be dealt with somehow).

The Accounting Chamber officials and Mullanur Ganeyev, chairman of the Duma Privatization Analysis Commission, sought to dispel Kazakov's pessimism. Sokolov tried to convince the journalists that the imbroglio could be straightened out by making certain amendments to the budget and lowering the GKI's targets. Ganeyev for his part said that by the end of the spring his commission would submit a revised privatization program to a parliamentary hearing. The deputy premier received that announcement with an inscrutable face.

Russia: Developments in Housing Sector Eyed

MM0504120196 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 30 Mar 96 p 2

[Report by Viktor Belikov and Dmitriy Dokuchayev: "Meters and Mirages. Eight Million Russian Families Are on the Housing Waiting List. They Are Hopeful"]

[FBIS Translated Text] An all-Russia conference on basic guidelines for federal policy in housing construction in 1996-1997 and for the long term through the year 2000 was held in the Kremlin yesterday [29 March] with the participation of President B. Yeltsin.

In the three years since the beginning of the implementation of the "Housing" targeted program the number of families waiting in line for improved living conditions has been reduced by almost 2 million. At the same time, the number of families in need of this across Russia is still very great — around 8 million.

Last year, for example, around 43 million square meters of housing were commissioned — nine percent more than in 1994. The number of new houses should increase at the same rate in the future too: In 1997 46-50 million square meters will be built, and in the year 2000 65-80 million square meters of housing will be constructed.

More housing was commissioned in 1995 than in any of the previous three years of the reforms. However, housing construction has still not reached the volume of the last prereform year, 1991 (49.8 million square meters), let alone the record year of 1987, when 72.8 square meters of housing was constructed.

A highly important question is the sources of funding for housing construction. They were mentioned in his speech by B. Yeltsin, a construction worker by trade who is well acquainted with the eternal problem of the shortage of funds for such an expensive enterprise as building new neighborhoods and housing projects.

The president announced a prepared package of edicts aimed at improving the procedure for granting free state subsidies to all citizens wishing to build a house or acquire an apartment.

One of the president's new edicts provides for the organization of a new procedure for the maintenance and repair of the housing stock. As early as this year housing management services and building maintenance subdepartments will be separated and become independent of one another. Contract client-contractor relations will be established between them; moreover, contracts for various jobs, repairs, and grounds maintenance will be awarded on a competitive basis. Contracts will go to whoever offers the most advantageous conditions for the residents of a block.

The designs for mass housing used in current housing construction attract considerable censure — they are uncomfortable, difficult to heat, faceless, and expensive to construct. Architects have been set the task of switching from standard designs churned out regardless of local conditions and the requirements of the future residents to so-called model housing designs.

These designs should be developed on a competitive basis on the basis of orders from specific private manufacturing enterprises and be offered to clients with the aid of a range of catalogs. The most important condition is to reduce consumption of power and heat in the operation of these buildings by 50-60 percent compared with the present level, bringing it into line with average world norms. This will considerably reduce running costs for the residents.

The construction industry and the construction materials and structures industry will undergo substantial changes, including for the renovation of the five-story blocks dating back to the fifties and sixties. There is around 250 million square meters of this housing in the country. These blocks are due for substantial renovation — mansard roofs will be added to them, elevators and garbage chutes will be installed, and the apartments will be remodeled.

How Some Build While Others Complain

The situation as regards housing construction in the regions varies considerably. Moscow's successes in this sphere are well known (IZVESTIYA wrote in detail on this subject in No. 47 for 13 March). There are regions in which the growth in housing area is even more impressive than in the capital.

For example, in Belgorod Oblast last year the growth was 32 percent, totaling 791,000 square meters. The oblast leadership (Governor Yevgeniy Savchenko) took account of the region's agricultural nature and opted for the construction of housing in rural localities. A decree was issued granting long-term loans to rural inhabitants for the construction of individual houses. Moreover, the peasants were given the opportunity to repay the loans not in money but in agricultural produce. This scheme has been such a success with the inhabitants of Belgorod Oblast that last year alone the number of individual houses built approximately trebled.

One of the problems in the housing sphere is the huge volume of unfinished construction (last year it amounted to 97 million square meters). The president's edict of 10 June last year promoted the solution of this problem. Henceforward an unfinished project can be offered for sale on a competitive basis. Moreover, two types of tender were envisaged: investment tenders for nearly finished buildings (to be sold to whoever can complete construction most quickly), and commercial tenders for buildings whose construction is in the early stages (to be sold to whoever offers the most money). As a result, a number of oblasts (Tula, Kurgan) have managed to substantially reduce the number of unfinished projects.

At the same time, there are regions in Russia that have not managed to recover from the 1992 slump. For example, the Republic of Mari El commissioned 457,000 square meters of housing in 1991, but only 202,000 in 1995. For Chita Oblast the figures were 541,000 and 197,000 respectively.

The differing successes of different regions in housing construction depend, in the opinion of David Khodzhayev, deputy chief of the Housing Construction Department, on two factors. First and foremost — on the commitment of the local authorities. Second — on correctly allowing for the specifics of the region: the existence of the region's own construction materials, the financial possibilities of the population, the residents' preference for particular forms of housing, and so forth.

How the Money Was Found

The liberalization of prices and the market reforms of 1992 caught the construction sector, like the entire Russian economy, unawares.

It became clear that for the sector to survive in the changing conditions new approaches and ideas were needed. These were elaborated in the "Housing" targeted state program ratified by the government decree of 20 June 1993.

Paradoxically enough, construction workers were also helped by the rampant hyperinflation of those times and the immaturity of the stock and currency markets. It turned out that at that period virtually the only way of saving money from devaluation was to invest it in real estate. It also proved possible to attract substantial foreign investment into the construction sphere. Thus in July of last year a major housing project with the World Bank was ratified; under this project Russia is to receive on highly preferential terms long-term credits worth $400 million.

On the whole, in the three years of the implementation of the "Housing" program the structure of the funding of construction has fundamentally changed. Whereas in the prereform period the budget provided 80 percent of the funding, nowadays the share of budget funds is only 23 percent. The rest comes from attracting resources from enterprises and the population.

How Mortgages Work in the United States and Russia

Three highly important presidential edicts on housing have been adopted recently: "On Additional Measures To Develop Mortgage Loans"; "On the Constitutional Right to Land"; and "On Developing the 'Home Ownership' Federal Targeted Program."

Mortgage is a method of making housing more affordable adopted throughout the world. In the United States this form of loan was introduced by Roosevelt during the Great Depression. In the past 60 years the system there has taken root so firmly, has been improved so much, and has acquired special institutions and legislation to such an extent that today virtually no one buys a house right away for its full value or for cash. A citizen wanting to change his living conditions goes to a bank, applies for a loan, and is vetted for his ability to pay. This is quite a rigorous procedure, but well within the capabilities of America's middle class. Having received a long-term loan, he purchases a house, which is henceforth the subject of lien. It can be taken away from him only by court order in the event of his failing to repay the loan and the interest on it.

This system, if established here, would suit many families. Especially young families who have not yet managed to amass sufficient capital to buy a whole apartment, but whose work and income prospects are good. In addition, this system enables the mortgage holder not to have to save up every time he wants a new apartment, but to exchange, say, a two-room apartment for a three-room apartment by taking out a loan for the cost of one room only.

The proper financial and legislative conditions for the development of mortgages have not yet been created in our country. The Housing Code has not yet been adopted and the question of private ownership of land has not been resolved, and nothing is likely to change for the better quickly in this area.

However, in the opinion of specialists, even if the U.S. mortgage system with its entire developed infrastructure were transplanted on Russian soil at the wave of a magic wand, it still would not produce the same effect as in the United States. First and foremost because of the high cost of loans in Russia. In the United States the interest is four-six percent per year, while in our country it is 30-40 percent per year. Thus hopes of solving all the problems with the aid of mortgages are obviously illusory.

How a Doctor of Economics Became a Construction Worker

Vladimir Kudryavtsev was brought into the housing business, as often happens, by his own housing problems. But the young and promising doctor of economic sciences did not look no further than his own square meters, but took a broader view of the problem, from the standpoint of changing the rules that prevailed in the housing market in the late eighties and early nineties.

His ideas, which involved creating painless plans for switching to apid housing, coincided with the main directions of housing reform in the country and hence met with a response. So the doctor of economic sciences exchanged his department at a higher educational establishment for the post of president of the nowadays widely known "Housing Initiative" corporation. The figures testify eloquently to the scale of its activity: In five years of operation 220,000 square meters of housing have been commissioned.

Kudryavtsev sees the solution in developing investment schemes making it possible for increasing numbers of citizens to acquire housing on acceptable terms.

Today "Housing Initiative" has developed a new system, called "Combi-invest," which incorporates elements of American mortgages, the German housing savings system, and Russian housing construction cooperatives. The various sources of investment that citizens wishing to acquire housing can utilize are packaged in the same scheme: personal savings, funds from the futures sale [fyuchersnaya prodazha] of their former housing, short-term loans from the general sponsor of the project, and special subsidies from their municipality. According to Russian Federation Government Decree No. 1278 of 10 December 1993, they have the right to receive subsidies from their municipality for 5 to 70 percent of the investment value of the housing. These subsidies, by agreement with a number of Moscow prefectures and public associations of people on the housing waiting list, are beginning to work in "Combi-invest." There are about 3,000 clients in the system, which has been effectively operating since last year.

Only around four-five percent of the population, according to Kudryavtsev's estimates, can afford to freely purchase apartments. Will the turn of the rest ever come? In conversation with IZVESTIYA David Khodzhayev compared housing construction with a locomotive capable of hauling first related sectors, and later the country's entire economy, out of their plight.

But the most important thing is that the real possibility of improving housing conditions noticeably changes people's social mood. A new apartment outweighs many other negative factors in life. Today the construction locomotive is gathering speed.

International Affairs

Ukraine: Sevastopol Hails Postponement of Yeltsin's Ukraine Visit

MK0604124296 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 6 Apr 96 p 2

[Report by Viktor Yadukha: "The Partition of the Black Sea Fleet Is Unlikely To Be Completed Before the Presidential Election. Sailors Are Counting on Russian President's Busy Schedule"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The information that Boris Yeltsin's visit to Kiev, scheduled for 4-5 April, has been postponed again could hardly be met anywhere with a greater hope than in Sevastopol. Having remained faithful to the Black Sea Fleet, torn to pieces, sailors are counting on a busy schedule of the Russian president which will leave him no time for making any arrangements with Kiev, regarded by them as premature and precarious.

A certain optimism in Crimea has also been prompted by the lack of progress at the recent meeting of defense ministers of the two countries, at which the Russian delegation showed an unusual firmness. The statement of the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry exhibits an open exasperation at the results of these talks — in particular, at Russia's insistent proposal that the Ukrainian Navy be taken away from the Russia-rented Sevastopol. The official Kiev "brings attention to the fact that problems of the deployment of the Ukrainian Navy on Ukrainian territory fall entirely within the jurisdiction of Ukraine as a sovereign state and are not liable to discussion at negotiations with Russia."

The problem is, however, that, say, the International Court of Justice — where none of the interested parties has applied so far regarding Sevastopol's affiliation — does not have any legal reason to confirm Ukraine's rights to this city. There are good grounds to believe that, despite all considerations of electoral advantage, the Kremlin is fully aware of this fact, and the question of Sevastopol's affiliation will sooner or later be raised to its legitimate historical height. Under the present situation, Kiev has nothing to do but to restrain its great-power ambitions and wait, trying to lure Boris Yeltsin into a negotiating net with an angelic voice. "The fundamentally important agreements between the two countries that are ready for signing now should not be linked with as yet unsolved issues," the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry alleges cunningly. [passage omitted]

Ukraine: Ukraine Insists That Navy Headquarters is Sevastopol

MK0604122796 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 6 Apr 96 p 4

[Report by Leonid Terentyev: "They Want To Hoist Ukrainian Flags in Sevastopol"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The postponement of Boris Yeltsin's visit to Ukraine did not shake the intention of the Ukrainian military to deploy its fleet in Sevastopol. The Ukrainian Navy Commander, Vice Admiral Volodymyr Bezkorovaynyy, did not mince words in one of his latest addresses, saying that the Ukrainian Navy headquarters was, is, and will be in Sevastopol.

The vice admiral thinks that the splitting up of the [Black Sea] Fleet will reduce, rather than increase, tensions in Crimea. He warned that unless the division is not over in the course of the year, there will be nothing left to divide. Volodymyr Bezkorovaynyy is now in Sevastopol. The chief of the Ukrainian Navy press center, Mykola Savchenko, announced on 5 April that a commission had been set up in Sevastopol to put forth efforts to divide up the Black Sea Fleet but that it was yet to go to work. A meeting of military specialists of the Ukrainian Navy and the Black Sea Fleet is supposed to take place in a few days. This information was also confirmed to KOMMERSANT-DAILY at the Black Sea Fleet press center.

According to Mykola Savchenko, the new Black Sea Fleet commander, Admiral Viktor Kravchenko, has more than once met with Ukrainian Navy Commander Volodymyr Bezkorovaynyy and is in close contact with him. It was decided that, before the final political decision on the question of bases for the fleet, the Black Sea Fleet and the Ukrainian Navy commands will develop a joint temporary plan on basing Black Sea Fleet and Ukrainian Navy ships in Sevastopol. This is connected with the fact that not all the ships received by Ukraine can be moved to bases other than Sevastopol at once. Ukrainian Navy high-ranking officers have been avoiding critical remarks about the Black Sea Fleet commander of late. What is more, according to Mykola Savchenko, "the Ukrainian Navy has no complaints about the transferred ships. As for restoring them, we will get help from our sponsors from Ukrainian cities." Savchenko also believes that the Ukrainian flag will be hoisted on board of some of the Black Sea Fleet ships in Sevastopol on 1 June 1996.

According to Ukrainian Navy Commander Volodymir Bezkorovaynyy, the Ukrainian Navy will include approximately 150 ships and vessels of different types. In particular, Ukraine will receive after the division three patrol combatants, eight small antisubmarine ships, three amphibious warfare Hovercraft, two big amphibious warfare ships, one medium amphibious warfare ship, three submarines, seven guided missile ships, and eight minesweepers.

The Ukrainian Navy faces a difficult situation with regard to manning the ships. The Ukrainian Navy command was even obliged to curtail the course of training for students at the Sevastopol Naval Institute. Students were sent early in April for a two-week training at places where they will be finally posted. In order to prevent the young officers from defecting to Russia on receipt of their graduation certificates, they were made, while they were still training, to sign contract undertaking to serve in the Ukrainian Navy at least five years upon graduation from the institute.

At the same time, Volodymir Bezkorovaynyy pointed out, the most important task before the Ukrainian Navy is to commission the ships and vessels accepted from the Black See Fleet as soon as possible. Specialists of the Ukrainian Navy note that refurbishing the equipment they are getting from the Black See Fleet calls for large sums, which are not available. Therefore, barter operations are practiced. Part of surplus engines were exchanged last year via "Ukrainmash" for property necessary for the Ukrainian Navy. High-ranking Ukrainian military people openly demand the right to independently sell surplus items, to lease out to commercial structures vessels, boats, and docking platforms received from the Black Sea Fleet. For example, a high-ranking Black Sea Fleet officer, who did not want to be named, assumed that "improving relations between military chiefs who accept and who turn over military facilities may have some special commercial grounds." Crimean police have lately been seizing large quantities of arms and ammunition from criminals. Automatic rifles, pistols, and explosives find their way to bandits from naval depots.

Ukraine: Mayor Opposes Sevastopol as Black Sea Fleet Main Base

LD0604165296 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1135 GMT 6 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Sevastopol — Viktor Semenov, the chairman of the Sevastopol city state administration, is against granting Sevastopol the status of the main base of the Black Sea Fleet. As is known, Russia is putting forward this demand at the Black Sea Fleet talks with Ukraine.

Semenov said at a news conference on 6 April that it was necessary "to abandon extreme points of view and search for a compromise" in order to solve the Black Sea Fleet problem. He believes that "no tariffs for the use of land, moorings, etc., other than those established for other businesses" should be applied to the Black Sea Fleet.

Semenov said the city administration and the Black Sea Fleet command are "working actively" towards establishing a procedure for settling the fleet's debt to the city's municipal enterprises. (As of 1 April 1996, the fleet's total debt to the city amounted to over 1.5 trillion karbovantsi.) Relevant proposals will be submitted to the governments of Ukraine and Russia for them to finalize these proposals.

The Sevastopol mayor said the Russian side should pay money to the Sevastopol budget in view of the fact that Black Sea Fleet sailors, employees of naval enterprises, and members of their families account for 25 percent of the city's population. He also believes it is necessary to continue work on implementing the initiative to set up local special economic zones in Sevastopol.

Ukraine: Kuchma Arrives on State Visit to Vietnam

LD0704170796 Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in Ukrainian 1500 GMT 7 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma today arrived in the capital of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam at the start of a state visit to this southeast Asian country, the first by a Ukrainian head of state. During the visit, the two sides plan to lay down a legal framework for bilateral cooperation. The Ukrainian delegation includes Foreign Minister Hennadiy Udovenko, Labor Minister Mykhaylo Kaskevych, Minister of Industry Valeriy Mazur, Valeriy Malov, minister of machine-building, military-industrial complex, and conversion, Serhiy Osyka, minister of foreign economic relations and trade, National Bank Chairman Viktor Yushchenko, and other officials.

Leonid Kuchma will meet President Le Duc Anh, National Assembly Chairman Nong Duc Manh, Prime Minister Vo Van Kiet, and business people. The sides will sign important bilateral documents. The visit ends on 9 April.

Ukraine: Kuchma, Vietnamese President Sign Bilateral Agreements

LD0804072596 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0627 GMT 8 Apr 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Sergey Blagov]

[FBIS Translated Text] Hanoi, 8 Apr — Vietnamese President Le Duc Anh and visiting Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma today signed an interstate agreement on the principles of developing bilateral relations. In the opinion of the sides, the document is expected to lay the legal basis for developing cooperation between the two countries.

At the talks held today, the presidents spoke for further deepening cooperation between the countries and expressed interest in considerably increasing economic cooperation based on the fact that in the current year the volume of bilateral trade turnover was only $37 million. Apart from this, an agreement was reached on opening the Ukrainian Embassy in Hanoi this year

Within the framework of Kuchma's four-day visit to Vietnam, which started on 6 April, the sides also signed an agreement on avoiding dual taxation and cooperation in science, technology, and labor resources.

Today the president of Ukraine will meet Do Muoi, general secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam, and parliament Chairman Nong Duc Manh.

Ukraine: Kuchma: Kiev Favors Deeper Integration With Minsk

LD0504173396 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1504 GMT 5 Apr 96

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Ukraine is for deeper integration with Belarus, especially in the economic sphere, President Kuchma said as he received the Belarussian parliamentary speaker Semen Sharetskiy, the presidential press-secretary Dmitriy Markov has said.

(The Belarussian parliamentary speaker is in Ukraine with a group of Belarussian people's deputies, who together with Russian and Ukrainian counterparts attended a conference marking the 10th anniversary of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant disaster. - IF).

At the same time Kuchma said that Ukraine was interested not in unilateral integration, but in cooperation based on respect for the national interests of all partners.

Sharetskiy briefed President Kuchma on the latest agreements concluded by Minsk and Moscow.

Kuchma and Sharetskiy discussed further measures to eliminate the effects of the Chernobyl disaster and the plant's future. The Ukrainian leader said that the Chernobyl problem should be tackled comprehensively with the participation of the world community.

The negotiators agreed that Ukraine and Belarus should pool efforts to minimize the effects of the Chernobyl disaster. Kuchma said he had signed a decree to establish an international research center on the basis of the Chernobyl power station.

On Thursday President Kuchma authorized a working group to form an anti-terrorist center, the presidential press-service has said. IF Note: The decision to found the anti-terrorist center was taken at a conference in the office of the presidential national security adviser, National Security Council Secretary Volodymyr Horbulin on March 15. It was also decided to form a working group that would soon submit its proposals for forming the center to the Ukrainian president.

Speakers at the conference said that terrorism had acquired ominous dimensions in the world and posed a great threat to Ukraine, which for several reasons, including growing migration flows, was flooded by criminal elements.

The newly-founded anti-terrorist center will coordinate activities by the Ukrainian Security Service and other law-enforcement ministries and agencies, the presidential spokesman said.

Later in the day Kuchma signed a decree to cancel as running counter to Ukrainian legislation the resolution of the government of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea of July 20 1995 on the rules of charging payments for using land in the second half of 1995.

President Kuchma on Thursday met with parliament members Yekaterina Vashchuk, Oleksandr Karpov, Ivan Zayets and Bogdan Boyko at their request.

Among other things they discussed the situation involving the adoption of Ukraine's new constitution. The lawmakers supported Kuchma's idea that the constitutional process should be accelerated.

Ukraine: Marchuk Prepares for Chernobyl Conference in Vienna

WS0804105596 Kiev INTELNEWS in English 0545 GMT 7 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kiev, April 6. Ukraine's Prime-Minister Yevhen Marchuk is preparing for a trip to Vienna, Austria on Monday, where he will head a delegation to the international conference, "Decade After Chernobyl."

According to Marchuk's press secretary, Larysa Ivshyna, the Prime Minister will deliver a speech on the aftermath of the disaster during the four-day conference, which has been organized by the World Health Organization, the European Commission, and the International Agency on Nuclear Energy in cooperation with the United Nations Committee on Humanitarian Issues and Science Organizations.

According to Ivshyna, the Prime-Minister will meet with various Austrian officials, including the state's Federal

Counselor, Parliamentary head, Finance Minister, Vice-Chancellor and Foreign Minister. The Ukrainian delegation will also meet with executives from the Viennese bureau of the Ukrainian Danube steamship line.

According to Zerkalo Nedeli, delegation members will include Secretary of the Council on National Security Volodymyr Horbulin, Minister on Population Protection Volodymyr Kholosha, Minister of Environmental Protection and Nuclear Security Yuriy Kostenko, Deputy-Foreign Minister Konstantyn Hryshchenko, Head of the Parliamentary Commission on the Chornobyl Disaster Volodymyr Yatsenko, and the head of Nuclear Policies and Nuclear Security Mykhailo Pavlovsky.

Thursday in Kiev, Kholosha presented a national report on the Chernobyl nuclear accident, and the report will be submitted to Parliament on April 18.

One hundred pages in length, the report outlines the parameters of radiation contamination, forecasts measures for the protection of the population, characterizes levels of irradiation and examines the state of health among the population inhabiting polluted districts, including an assessment of the efficiency of the nation's counter-measures.

Ukrainian Radiological Training Center Director Viktor Poyarkov, delivering a speech at Thursday's presentation, reported that throughout the past 10 years about 2,500 people have died from diseases related to irradiation, and he cited a marked increase in the incidence of thyroid cancer among children 15 years and younger. According to the report, some 300 million curie escaped into atmosphere due to the 1986 nuclear accident. On the whole, 50,500 square kilometers of Ukrainian territory inhabited by three million people were contaminated, including 74 districts of Kiev, Zhytomyr, Chernihiv, Rivne, Cherkasy, Khmelnytskiy, Ivano-Frankivsk, Volyn, Chernivtsi, Sumy and Ternopil oblasts.

The most polluted territory is considered to be the 30-kilometer zone around the nuclear power plant with a level of localized contamination totaling 50,000 curie per square kilometer. Inhabitants of 76 nearby localities were resettled.

According to Poyarkov, the radioactive level of 200 tons of nuclear fuel buried in the sarcophagus erected over the forth reactor totals 23 million curie. He noted that leakage from the sarcophagus totals 0.3 curie per annum.

Ukraine: G7, Kiev Fail To Reach Agreement on Chernobyl Closure

WS0804110296 Kiev INTELNEWS in English 0531 GMT 6 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kiev, April 5. As world leaders prepared for the G-7 summit on Chernobyl to be held in Moscow on April 17, a Ukrainian government delegation failed to reach a final agreement with G-7 experts on the issue of the plant's closure.

The Ukrainian group met with G-7 experts in the French Embassy in Kiev this week for a final round of consultations before the summit, however, the two sides failed to develop a working strategy for the allocation of Western aid for the plant's decommission.

Nevertheless, the G-7 officials provided the Ukrainian team with comprehensive information regarding the terms of allocation, noting that the industrialized G-7 nations will issue credits worth $2.5 billion to $2.8 billion, as well as a grant of $512 million to facilitate decommission of the plant. (A portion of this aid has already been used to secure the safety of the plant's sarcophagus, which currently contains 200 tons of uranium and three thousand cubic meters of radioactive water).

Ukrainian experts estimate that the shut-down of the plant will cost $4 billion to $6 billion. While the final cost of the shutdown and the volume of funds needed from the West has yet to be determined, a source in the Ministry of Environment and Nuclear Safety said the sum needed for the shutdown of the first reactor alone has been estimated at $1 billion.

Ukraine: UN Grants $88 Million To Aid Crimean Tatar Repatriation

LD0704203196 Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in Ukrainian 1800 GMT 7 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Delegates to a UN conference of donor countries held in Geneva announced plans to allocate $88-89 million for a program to aid the integration of formerly deported peoples returning to Crimea. The conference, held on 2 April, was attended by 25 countries. The official delegation from Crimea included Prime Minister Arkadiy Demydenko and Mustafa Dzhemilev, chairman of the Crimean Tatar People's Majlis.

The economic, political, and cultural integration of former deportees into Ukraine is a matter of not only interest, but deep concern for European countries and the United States, the Crimean prime minister told a news conference in Simferopol. He stressed that the conference had shown a global understanding of the extent to which stability in Crimea and Ukraine depended on the economic well-being of deportees.

The donor countries should understand that by granting aid to Crimean Tatars they promote security and stability in Eastern Europe, Majlis Chairman Mustafa Dzhemilev told journalists. He added that the great political significance of the conference was that it was the first time the Crimean Tatar issue received such high-level attention in Geneva.

According to Dzhemilev, the successful resettlement of Crimean Tatars requires $2.8 billion.

Ukraine: Turkey To Grant $87 Million for Crimean Tatar Repatriation

WS0804080996 Lvov INFOBANK in English
0640 GMT 08 Apr 96

[From the "News Service" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Simferopol — According to Arkady Demydenko, the Prime Minister of Autonomous Republic of Crimea, Turkish Government promises to grant $87 million, within the next three years, to provide living conditions for departed to Crimea peoples. Arkady Demydenko informed that Greece, Switzerland, Norway, and the Netherlands are also agreed to provide financial support, but their shares do not exceed several hundred thousand dollars. Prime Minister hopes that money will come directly to the Crimean budget.

National Affairs

Ukraine: Supreme Council Speaker Hospitalized After Heart Attack

LD0604190496 Kiev UNIAR in Ukrainian
1830 GMT 6 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev — Oleksandr Moroz, Ukrainian supreme council chairman, had a heart attack around 0500 on 5 April. He was taken to hospital where doctors diagnosed a myocardial infarction.

Ukraine: Kuchma Orders Establishment of Antiterrorist Committee

LD0504173196 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian
1440 GMT 5 Apr 96

[Names and titles as received]

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev — On instructions from Ukraine's President Leonid Kuchma, Vasyl Krutov, chief of the "A" directorate of the Security Service of Ukraine, has been appointed head of a working group in charge of setting up an antiterrorist committee in Ukraine. UNIAN has learned this from the Ukrainian president's administration.

Under the instructions, the working group is obliged, within one month, to put forward proposals concerning organizational and administrative measures to set up the antiterrorist committee.

The working group also includes Leonid Borodych, first deputy minister of internal affairs of Ukraine; Valentyn Valtiv, first deputy commander of the National Guard of Ukraine; Volodymyr Prystayko, deputy chairman of the Security Service of Ukraine; Mykola Bilokon, chief of the militia administrative services main directorate under the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine; and other officials.

Ukraine: Republican Party Reportedly 'Declares War' on Government

AU0504134996 Kiev MOLOD UKRAYINY
in Ukrainian 2 Apr 96 p 1

[Report by Vasyl Shklyar: "Republicans Are the Third Force, Which May Become First"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Against the background of moderate political lull that Democrats explain by the need for general reconciliation on the eve of adopting the Constitution, the news conference held by the Ukrainian Republican Party [URP] turned out to be very agitated. Its leader, people's deputy Bohdan Yaroshynskyy, said about radical changes in the URP tactics, changes that are dictated by the urgent need to intensify the right-wing opposition. The present situation in Ukraine is also further complicated by the fact that the forthcoming elections in Russia have boosted attempts by practically all political forces of the neighboring state to draw our country into a neo-empire. Guided by directives from Moscow, the Communist Party of Ukraine and its faction at the Supreme Council have obviously directed their activity toward liquidating our state.

Meanwhile, the power structures in Ukraine do not take appropriate measures for decisive repulsion of the communist offensive and do not, in fact, do anything to improve the economic situation in the country. The president and his entourage try to shun responsibility for the critical state of affairs in the state, and the government does not have promising economic programs; the supreme legislative body is also in crisis. It is not accidental that, alongside such a grim assessment of all branches of power, the Republicans threw light upon their own Center for Studying Anti-Ukrainian Activity (TsVAD). Its president, people's deputy Oleksandr Shandryuk believes that materials of the center prove direct involvement of representatives of power structures in antistate activities and betrayal of Ukraine's national interests.

Consequently, the URP leadership declares war on the supreme state leadership and condemns so-called centrist democratic forces, which, by their policy of compromise, actually approve the government's passive and sometimes even subversive activity. The present authorities remain deaf to the ideas of the Republicans on radical reforms in the economy, especially in what concerns fundamental changes in the taxation system and in the new budget philosophy.'

Mr. Yaroshynskyy does not conceal the fact that the URP is already forming a "shadow" Cabinet of Ministers and similar structures of the executive power in regions. The party would not have considered itself a serious political force if it hadn't had its own candidate for president. Right after adoption of the Ukrainian Constitution, the Republicans intend to start a campaign for dissolving the Supreme Council and holding new elections to the National Assembly. Besides, in their opinion, parliamentary elections must be held not later than in three months and presidential elections — six months after the completion of the constitutional process.

One may disagree with such determination on individual points, but establishment of the right-wing opposition deserves absolute approval. Because, judging from lessons offered by post-socialist countries, we are exposed to considerable danger. At the new elections, the people would rather vote "against" and not "for." Just recall, not for Kuchma, but against Kravchuk and not for Kwasniewski, but against Walesa. If our people continue to believe in the erroneous stereotype that the left wing alone is in consistent opposition to the present power, then a very sad conclusion will suggest itself: The Ukrainian "left-wing" forces are not Ukrainian at all. In this situation, it is only a third force that may save the situation.

Ukraine: Communists Threaten To Boycott Parliament Session

LD0504133296 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1200 GMT 5 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev — The Communists of Ukraine faction in the Ukrainian Supreme Council demanded that the issue of withdrawing deputy powers from individuals who are also working in executive structures should be immediately included in the agenda.

Yevhen Marmazov, one of the faction's leaders, told the UNIAN news agency that if its demand is ignored then the faction will not register on Tuesday 9 April, Government Day, thus blocking the session's work.

At the Ukrainian Supreme Council session on 5 April faction leader Petro Symonenko said that it is precisely the deputies who are also members of the government who are blocking the adoption of important decisions by not taking part in the work of parliament. He also stressed "the executive authority's premeditated penetration of the legislative authority for the purpose of subordinating it to its interests and to achieve the unsupervised plundering of state property." According to him, the executive authority, led by the president, aims to paralyze the work of the Supreme Council and push it aside from the constitutional process. Petro Symonenko accused the executive authority of "bribing the mass media, which are misinforming the populace."

Ukraine: Six Out of 32 Constituencies Have Valid By-Election Results

LD0704201796 Kiev UT-1 Television Network in Ukrainian 1800 GMT 7 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Repeat parliamentary elections were held today in 31 constituencies where elections were invalid on 10 and 24 December, due to a low voter turnout. Another constituency, in Sevastopol, held a by-election to replace a deceased deputy. Our special correspondent Greta Tsvig is in the Central Electoral Commission to bring us the latest news. [passage omitted]

[Tsvig] Six constituencies reported a valid election by 2100 [1800 GMT]. These are Leningradskiy and Darnitskiy constituencies in Kiev, Leninskiy and Nakhimovskiy constituencies in Sevastopol, Zavodskoy constituency in Khmelnitskiy Region, and Sosnovskiy constituency in Cherkassy Region. Some constituencies are still counting ballots. [passage omitted]

There are 450 seats in the Ukrainian Supreme Council, 32 of which are vacant.

Ukraine: Government To Modernize Nuclear Power Engineering Industry

LD0604115196 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 0930 GMT 6 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev — The next session of the Ukraine Cabinet of Ministers Presidium is expected to make a decision on the structural reorganization of the nuclear power engineering industry complex, a reliable source has told UNIAN.

It is envisaged that proposals by the State Committee for the Use of Nuclear Power will be adopted as a basis for further transformations in the industry. In particular, a list has been made of enterprises subject to privatization, enterprises not subject to privatization, and enterprises to be turned into joint stock societies with more than 50 percent of their authorized capital belonging to the state. The State Committee for the

Use of Nuclear Power proposes that all nuclear power stations and enterprises of the uranium-extracting and uranium-processing industry must fully belong to the state.

It is planned to set up a unified national power generating company "Enerhoatom" as the property of Ukrainian nuclear power stations. The company will be in charge of coordinating relations between the nuclear power stations and the energy market. The company will make centralized purchases of nuclear fuel, work out and introduce unified technical and economic norms, organize training of personnel for nuclear power stations, etc. "Enerhoatom" will also perform the functions of an operating organization which, under Ukrainian and international law, should be responsible for the safety of nuclear power stations and which should cover losses if a nuclear accident occurs.

The Cabinet of Ministers has drafted a Ukrainian presidential decree, under which the national nuclear power-generating company "Enerhoatom", a state-run enterprise, should be set up by 1 May. The company will be managed by a president, to be appointed by the Government. The company's top body will be its board, which will comprise, among others, directors of nuclear power stations. Other members of the board will be approved by the Government following a submission from the State Committee for the Use of Nuclear Power. In accordance with the draft decree, each nuclear power station will have the status and rights of a legal entity.

Ukraine: Fourth Reactor Poses Threat of Another Nuclear Disaster

LD0704140396 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1344 GMT 7 Apr 96

[By Mikhail Melnik]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV, April 7 (Itar-Tass) — "The Chernobyl nuclear power station might explode at any moment. The destroyed fourth nuclear reactor code-named 'Ukritie' (shelter) is a non-controlled mass of hazardous nuclear materials and radioactive substances which do not meet the requirements of the protective cover," Vladimir Shcherbina, deputy director of the Nuclear and Radiation Safety Department of the International Scientific Centre "Ukritie" told journalists today.

The condition of 205 tons of uranium fuel, 700 kilograms of plutonium and 2,200 kilograms of uranium-235 is practically unknown and is fraught with unpredictable consequences, he said. Shcherbina believes that the construction of the "entombment is not reliable since it was built unjustifiably fast. As a result, in 1994-1995, around one square kilometers of cracks in the concrete cover of the reactor were sealed, but inside, there are places where the radiation level reaches 2.000 Roentgen."

Shcherbina believes that the worst danger is posed by possibility of a spontaneous chain reaction, the collapse of the construction accompanied by a discharge of radioactive dust measuring 20 million curies and the spread of the disaster from the fourth to the third reactor. The consequences of the disaster might be comparable with the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear accident.

Secretary of the National Security Council under the Ukrainian President Vladimir Gorbulin, a prominent expert in nuclear power engineering, in an interview with Itar-Tass expressed the opinion that Ukraine primarily links the problem of shutting down the Chernobyl nuclear power station with the solution of the problems of the "Ukritie" facility. According to Gorbulin, this is the main problem which Ukraine cannot resolve on its own without financial assistance of G-7 countries.

Gorbulin noted that a political decision to be made by Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma on shutting down the Chernobyl nuclear power station by the year 2000 should trigger an adequate response from the West which had pledged to help Ukraine in the solution of this problem. The expert said that during the G-7 summit in Moscow due on April 19-20 Leonid Kuchma "would make it clear how serious the Chernobyl problem really is."

Two projects have been developed to rule out a possibility of accidents at the "Ukritie". One of them envisaged reinforcing the "entombment" and the other one - covering it with a reliable protective cover "Ukritie-2." The projects have been assessed at around 1.5 billion dollars each.

It is not immediately clear what sum will be mentioned at the Moscow summit. Gorbulin believes that Ukraine needs no less than four billion dollars to shut down the Chernobyl nuclear station.

Ukraine: Crimean Speaker: Crimea Has Won on Constitution Issue

LD0504135396 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1200 GMT 5 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Simferopol — "We cannot be entirely satisfied with the Ukrainian parliament's decision on the Crimean constitution, but strategically we have won," Crimean Supreme Council Chairman Yevhen Suprunyuk said at a news conference today. He was with his three deputies, Anushevan Danelyan, Yuriy Podkopayev and Refat Chubarov.

In reply to a UNIAN correspondent's question about the parliament's further actions, he said that it is necessary above all to strengthen those articles in the Crimean constitution concerning the peninsula's powers, the subordination of its internal affairs bodies, and the judicial authorities.

The Crimean parliament chairman believes that "a lack of agreement at the initial stage" may lead to the situation developing "as in the Dniester or Gagauz regions [of Moldova]." He is convinced that "we will be able to achieve something reaching beyond Crimea if there is unity and calm in the republic. It is necessary to resolve internal problems in order to gain considerable powers on the external arena."

Ukraine: 'Ambiguous' Reaction to Crimean Constitution Noted

LD0504154696 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1438 GMT 5 Apr 96

[By Mikhail Melnik and Raisa Stetsyura]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV, April 5 (Itar-Tass) — The endorsement of the Crimean Constitution by the Ukrainian parliament on Thursday prompted ambiguous reaction in Ukraine.

Aleksandr Lavrinovich, deputy chairman of the Parliamentary Commission on Legal Policy and Judiciary Reform, said the Crimean Constitution is a political rather than a juridical act. Not one of the procedures in the Ukrainian parliament envisages the endorsement of one part of the document and non-endorsement of another, Lavrinovich told Itar-Tass. The Crimean Constitution will emerge when it is fully endorsed by the Ukrainian parliament.

The fundamental law is not valid until all its articles are coordinated and endorsed, Serhiy Holovatt, the justice minister, said.

As soon as the Ukrainian president signs the parliamentary decision, Crimea will achieve its fundamental law, believes Yuriy Karmazin, the chairman of the Provisional Commission for the Study of the Political and Legal Situation in the Crimea.

"We have eased tension and opened scope for work of the Supreme Soviet of Crimea," "state institutions must not cramp the possibilities of structures of power in Crimea so they could work in the same legal zone commensurate with the unitarian state of Ukraine," Ukraine's parliament speaker Oleksandr Moroz noted.

Ukrainian parliamentarians drop from the Constitution some 20 articles which, in their opinion, contradict the country's legislation. These articles refer to citizenship of the autonomy, language, symbols, foreign policy activity, natural wealth, judicial and executive authorities. Under the Constitution, the Crimean Supreme Soviet is not a supreme legislative body of the republic and has a right to form a cabinet only with the consent of Ukrainian president. The Crimean parliament may make supplements and amendments to the Constitution, but they will be valid only after being endorsed by the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet.

The Crimean delegation left for Simferopol with mixed feelings. It is not certain whether the Crimean Constitution exists. Speaker of the Crimean parliament Yevgeniy Suprunyuk expressed dissatisfaction over the fact that Crimea had virtually been equated with a Ukrainian region.

Belarus

Belarus: Report on Lukashenka's 4 Apr News Conference

LD0504131696 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 0730 GMT 5 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] At a news conference in Minsk on the results of the signing of the treaty with Russia, Belarus's President Alyaksandr Lukashenka was, as always, open to the utmost. [passage omitted]

[Begin Lukashenka recording] The vast majority of people support this treaty. Our poll on [word indistinct] attitude toward this treaty showed that approximately 90 percent of the population in [words indistinct] in the villages, in district centers, [words indistinct] in Minsk, approximately [word indistinct] 90 percent of the population support this treaty. As for the eastern part of Belarus — Vitebsk and Mogilev regions — only a very few were hesitant about it. [passage omitted]

We are now creating an apparatus and selecting people for it. The place has been chosen — the administration of the president of the Russian Federation — the integration committee will sit there. My secretariat will sit there for [word indistinct] very limited number of people. I think that [words indistinct] Belarusians will help the chairman of the Supreme Council to implement its powers. We will set specific tasks for implementation. I will say more: When Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin and I were presenting Chernomyrdin to the Government of Russia and to senior officials of the Russian Federation as the head of the integration executive committee, we agreed that we needed to show people the advantages of our union. Our work will be directed toward this before anything else.

Which issues specifically? I promise that, most likely through the Mir broadcasting company and through our Belarusian mass media, we will inform you about each step we take. Nobody intends to conceal anything and hide from people those problems which we will be solving. [end recording]

Answering a question from Tamara Vyatskaya, correspondent of Mir radio, on the president's reaction to the rallies of radical nationalists in Minsk and the coverage of these events in the mass media, Alyaksandr Lukashenka said:

[Begin Lukashenka recording] I must tell you, Tamara Grigoryevna, that I am surprised at some of the mass media. I have begun an active dialogue with the heads of Russian Public Television, Russia TV Channel, and the NTV and I have established full understanding with them. I believe that those journalists would like to stay and work in the Republic of Belarus but we will not allow these events to be interpreted as they would like. Sometimes [words indistinct] the coverage is not just biased but is outright dirty tricks. [Words indistinct]

Further more, we expressed our protest to certain diplomats and asked them also to leave the Republic of Belarus — I do not want to forestall future events, we will await the reaction of that side. We will act in this resolutely, as a sovereign and independent state. We will not allow anyone to interfere with our internal affairs. It so happens that some people do not like the fact that Belarus has assumed an independent position and will not bend as some others do. [Words indistinct] for us to be independent and sovereign.

One should not...[Lukashenka pauses] A diplomat is there to deal with his own tasks and should respect our laws but not head a column and direct an illegal action.

In brief, my attitude to this action is straightforward, the same as yours. The action is illegal. What other attitude can there be to it? But neither the Russian Public Television nor Russia TV Channel nor anybody else actually said that it was an illegal action.

As for the foreign mass media, everything was planned — I already spoke about this on the eve of the first action [24 March], because within several minutes this was all covered in the mass media in Western countries. They worry about our democracy! But I say: What if this happened in your country? They would not be trying to decide what happened. You can see on your tv screens how they react there to similar illegal actions. [words indistinct]

We are not against this absolutely but we ask that people should gather in a specially designated place — young people, adults, and old people — if it is necessary you can invite the president — I will speak too and explain my position. People gather and talk [words indistinct] there is nothing bad in it. But, excuse me, when, without announcing it, an unsanctioned action is held and order is violated in the capital city, traffic is halted, what reaction can I have? [end recording]

Belarus: Tsyapkala: Moscow May Suspend Strategic Missile Pullout

LD0504165496 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1504 GMT 5 Apr 96

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A top Belarussian diplomat warned on Friday Russia might suspend removing its strategic nuclear missiles from Belarus.

This might happen if the Czech Republic and Hungary were accepted by NATO as members and if the North

Atlantic alliance stationed some of its tactical nuclear missiles on their territory, First Deputy Foreign Minister Valeriy Tsyapkala told a news conference in Minsk.

But, "in any case, the issue, if it is raised, would become the subject of negotiations (between Belarus and) Russia," he said.

"It is surprising that some countries have shown readiness to have NATO tactical nuclear missiles stationed on their territory," Tsyapkala said. He said this was irrational from the standpoint of those countries' own security since having missiles on their territory would automatically make them potential targets of Russian nuclear attack.

"Russia would have to aim its missiles at the new launchers of the North Atlantic alliance," he said.

Belarussian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka said on Thursday Belarus might take "adequate measures" if NATO placed some of its tactical missiles in the Czech Republic or Poland, but he declined to say directly whether Russia would in that case suspend withdrawing its strategic missiles from Belarus.

Lukashenko told a news conference in Minsk 18 strategic missiles and three spare warheads for them were stationed in his country today.

By the moment Belarus became independent in 1991 there were 81 former Soviet strategic missiles in it.

Lukashenko said that de facto Belarus had always been Russia's military ally. He said Minsk had never objected to Russia using its strategic radar in Gantsevichi.

Belarus: Russia Ready To Help Train Military Personnel

LD0504151296 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1341 GMT 5 Apr 96

[By Andrey Aleksandrovich]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MINSK, April 5 (Itar-Tass) — Russia is ready to help Belarus not only in setting up the border but also in the training of military personnel, material and technical supply of Belarusian frontier troops, placing of orders, manufacture, production and repair of armaments and equipment, Major-General Valeriy Martyushin, chief of the operational group of the Russian border guards troops in Belarus, said on Friday.

Russia and Belarus will share out to finance the setting up of the Belarusian state frontier with Latvia (177.5 kilometres) and with Lithuania (599.2 kilometres), Martyushin said in an interview published by the newspaper Sovetskaya Belarussiya on Friday. These stretches of the border have not yet been marked and have not been equipped.

Servicemen of the operational group are not involved in tasks unconnected with the protection of Belarusian state frontiers, except for the effort to overcome the consequences of natural disasters. A similar operational group has been formed by the Belarusian side. It will work in Moscow in the Russian Federal Border Guard Service.

With the signing of the agreement on the community, servicemen of the Russian operational group review the plan of joint work with Belarusian frontier guards to make interstate cooperation of the two countries even closer.

Belarus: Minsk Signs Agreement on CIS Border Troops Interaction

WS0804080796 Minsk BELAPAN in English 0755 GMT 8 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] As the Belarusian first deputy foreign minister, Valerly Tsyapkala, informed reporters at the April 5 briefing, on April 2, Belarus signed an agreement on interaction between national border troops of the CIS member-states in the event of emergency situations at the external borders of the CIS. However the Belarusian party signed this agreement with two reservations.

Firstly, Belarus will participate in the formation of a united CIS group of border troops in accordance with national legislation, which, as is generally known, banned military service by Belarusian citizens beyond the Republic. Secondly, Belarus will finance only its participation in the CIS group.

Speaking about other results of the session of the CIS Council of Foreign Ministers, which took place in Moscow on April 2, Mr. Tsapkala pointed out that its participants discussed questions concerning European security and NATO eastward expansion among others. A long-term plan of integration development of the CIS for 1996-1997 was approved. The plan stipulates virtually all spheres of cooperation between the CIS member states. In the near future this sizable document will be submitted for consideration by the CIS Council of government heads and of state heads.

The foreign ministers also approved a number of documents concerning the illegal migration of citizens of non-CIS countries, the entry, exit, and stay of citizens of non-CIS countries on the territory of the CIS, and the procedure of the crossing of the CIS external border by citizens of CIS countries. These documents will also be submitted to the CIS Council of government heads and of state heads. According to Mr. Tsapkala, the ministers also discussed a draft resolution on the agreement on the rehabilitation of deported persons, national minorities, and nationalities, as well as the status of the CIS Interstate Court.

Belarus: Opposition To Fight Regime; Ready To Use Force

MK0604133296 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 6 Apr 96 p 3

[Interview with Zenon Poznyak, leader of the Belarusian National Front, by Tatyana Invzhenko, UNIAR correspondent: "Armed Struggle Against the Lukashenka Regime Possible. Belarusian National Front Leader Will Fight for Sovereignty by All Available Means" — in Kiev, date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] Zenon Poznyak, a [Belarusian] opposition leader, who is currently in Kiev, responded to questions from our correspondent.

[Poznyak] Our leadership has a criminal mentality. It is no longer concerned about the people; it is ready to betray them at any moment. The preservation of an independent state is not in its interests because the incumbent Belarusian leadership must be put on trial under articles of the Criminal Code. In abolishing the statehood by creating a union with Russia, they also are abolishing state institutions that could prosecute them. We have people capable of standing up to Lukashenka. One of them is myself. There is also Karpenko who represents a small party: the United Civic Party. Shushkevich will also possibly try to fight, but he has no chance. Maybe other opposition leaders will also be able to resist Lukashenka.... I would like to point out that the election marathon in Belarus has already begun with the persecution of political rivals. Belarus today is not a democratic country. Our laws are ineffective; there is no free press; the state has full monopoly of radio and TV broadcasting; independent newspapers are printed abroad and secretly brought into Belarus. Trade unions are being abolished in retaliation for taking strike action in conformity with the law. People are grabbed in the street and thrown into dungeons. This is a regime similar to a Latin American junta, transposed to the center of Europe. The situation is so volatile that it can end in a civil war....

[Ivzhenko] Mr. Poznyak, it is said in Ukraine that the Belarusian opposition is so small and weak that you will not be able to stand up to Lukashenka without the assistance of, say, Ukrainian parties that are close to you. What can you say to this?

[Poznyak] There is a sufficiently strong opposition in Belarus. After all, Lukashenka is supported only by Communists and the Russian "fifth column." But the dictatorship regime is consistently destroying our opposition forces. Therefore we have to turn to the world community for support. This, above all, involves informational assistance. Informational influence on Russia is especially important today. Moral support by the world community is also of key importance to us.

[Ivzhenko] You said that you would fight for the independence and sovereignty of Belarus by all available means, while Ukrainian parties have apparently agreed to help you. What means in particular are meant? What sort of assistance are you expecting from the Ukrainian parties?

[Poznyak] We will act in conformity with Article 57 of our Constitution. It says: "Each citizen is obligated to defend his Motherland" by all available means, including with arms in hand.

[Ivzhenko] You don't think that Ukraine's involvement in your struggle will lead to charges of interference in the country's affairs, for instance, against Rukh on the part of Lukashenka or the Russian leadership?

[Poznyak] The fact is that we are not expecting Ukrainian forces to take part in an armed struggle. We are only talking about assistance in disseminating information. Our armed struggle is our own concern. It will be us, not Ukrainians, who will be dying for the independence of our country. In the 19th century alone, there were five uprisings in Belarus: Each generation rose against slavery. We know how to fight. Twenty three parties and public organizations in Belarus have declared their readiness to uphold the sovereignty of their state with arms in hand. This is the position of our democratic forces.

[Ivzhenko] Do you believe in victory?

[Poznyak] Absolutely. The people of Belarus are at present stupefied by official ideology. But pretty soon the system will debunk itself, because it is based on corruption, theft, and lawlessness. Lukashenka was brought into office by Russian special services; he is Moscow's creature. This is an amazing situation: The president engages in smuggling; corruption has become state policy; national interests are betrayed; and sovereignty is being traded. The incumbent regime is a dead-end evolution path for Belarus. I believe that Soviet mentality among a substantial part of the Belarusian people will soon give way to new thinking, a new vision of the future of an independent Belarus. Today each individual is an object of struggle. Communism is still strong. The totalitarian regime came with bloodshed and, to all appearances, it will also leave with bloodshed....

Moldova

Moldova: Prosecutor's Office Decides Not To Investigate Creanga

AU0604172696 Chisinau BASAPRESS in English 1930 GMT 5 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Chisinau 05/04/1996 (BASA-press) — The Prosecutor General's Office will not examine the presidential petition on "General Pavel Creanga's insubordination and failure to execute the Supreme Commander's order."

Vasile Gutu, Prosecutor General's Office spokesman, said the Prosecutor's Office will not follow up this petition since the Constitutional Court (CC) ruled yesterday that presidential decree No. 68 issued on March 15 was unconstitutional. Pending the CC ruling the Prosecutor General carried out no investigation.

On March 21, President Snegur petitioned the Prosecutor General to examine the insubordination of General Pavel Creanga who "called his underlings to insubordination, some of whom followed his example."

According to the presidential petition, Creanga's insubordination "included offence elements of Articles 239 and 240 of the Penal Code."

In a phone interview with BASA-press yesterday, Creanga said his actions after the presidential decree had been issued were "measures meant to protect constitutional order."

Moldova: Officers Oppose Creanga's Reinstatement as Defense Minister

LD0504192896 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1746 GMT 5 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] CHISINAU, Apr 5 (Interfax) — A group of Moldovan army officers spoke out Friday against the reinstatement of Pavel Creanga as defense minister.

The Constitutional Court earlier declared unconstitutional the presidential decree relieving Creanga of his duty.

The Defense Ministry press office told Interfax that 100 out of 101 participants at a meeting in the ministry, attended by officers of the Defense Ministry staff and the Chisinau garrison, signed an appeal to President and Commander-in-Chief Mircea Snegur, Parliament Chairman Petru Lucinschi and Prime Minister Andrei Sangheli, which says that "Division General Pavel Creanga cannot further head the Defense Ministry."

"The army is not drawn into politics, it stays faithful to the constitution, military oath and military regulations, and continues to fulfill its mission but, unfortunately, the normal process has been disrupted by the latest developments," reads the appeal.

The officers said they do not doubt the Constitutional Court's verdict but ask the Moldovan leadership to resolve the issue as soon as possible because the verdict has only "aggravated the situation in the army and put the military in an ambiguous situation."

According to the appeal, the officers have to obey both the Constitutional Court verdict effectively reinstating Creanga as defense minister, and the commander-in-chief's order, under which Mircea Snegur personally heads the army. The authors of the appeal believe that Creanga must not resume his duties until the Moldovan leadership resolves the situation.

Earlier Creanga told journalists that he is prepared to resign voluntarily if the Constitutional Court reinstates him in his duty in accordance with the constitution.

Moldova: Snegur Aide Sees Court Ruling as Encouraging Corruption

AU0604154296 Chisinau INFOTAG in English 1930 GMT 5 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Chisinau, April 5 (INFOTAG) — Victor Josu, adviser to President Snegur, expressed his disagreement with "those high-ranked officials who are saying that the Constitutional Court's decision of yesterday brought about neither winners nor losers. There is a winner — corruption in state structures."

Commenting the Court's decision on the non-constitutionality of Snegur's decree, Josu stated that "exactly this disgraceful phenomenon — corruption, which undermines our statehood — is now celebrating its next moral victory.

"Certainly, as advocates of law-governed state, we cannot help feeling a satisfaction that the supremacy of the Constitution is being put into reality. However, all of us should ponder over one question: Why is the law-governed state which we are trying to build is so inefficient in its struggle against corruption and in fact encourages the impunity of corrupted officials? I do not mean Pavel Creanga here, but a fact remains a fact: The State Calculation Chamber has disclosed serious financial violations in his ministry, but things haven't budged an inch," Josu said.

He expressed regret that "while being so efficient in defending the rights of ministers, which is quite normal in general, the state is absolutely impotent to defend the rights of hundreds of thousand of its citizens for timely getting their salaries and pensions, which is absolutely abnormal, isn't it?

"It is evident that the further building of such law-governed state will require serious corrections, including those with regard to its basement element — the Constitution, which currently fails to provide for the effective protection of citizens' basic rights," the presidential adviser said.

Moldova: Press Comments on Creanga Constitutional Ruling

AU0604173796 Chisinau BASAPRESS in English 1930 GMT 5 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Chisinau 05/04/1996 (BASA-press) — President Snegur will comply with the ruling of the only authority of constitutional jurisdiction but might make use of earlier planned actions in case of defeat, are the prevailing comments in the Moldovan media regarding yesterday's Constitutional Court (CC) ruling that the presidential decree on defence minister dismissal was unconstitutional.

"Whether we want it or not, the political match will go on," if the linesmen will respect the promise not to touch the ball, said Vsevolod Ciornei, editor in chief of the newspaper MOMENTUL. He said the previous CC rulings favoring the president were once seen as excess of loyalty to the presidency and the CC dispelled this impression by its yesterday's ruling. MOMENTUL stressed that none of the CC members had separate opinions, which should mean the decision was adopted unanimously.

The weekly MESAGERUL noted "the hearing of the sides shows not only frailty and disagreement of the laws with the Constitution, but also that some dignitaries have poor knowledge of the legislation." The article signed by Ilie Lipcan said "the presidential decree was issued on the basis of laws adopted in 1992 which were neither repealed nor adjusted to the Constitution." According to him, "President Snegur received a blow that left him in knockdown" and started "the countdown."

The newspaper TARA said "it's very unlikely that Snegur will surrender and will not strike back at corrupt elements from the power structures." TARA said Snegur's opponents do not intend yet to suspend the president's mandate.

Moldova: Army Situation Seen as 'Difficult, Extraordinary'

AU0604174396 Chisinau BASAPRESS in English 1930 GMT 5 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Chisinau 05/04/1996 (BASA-press) — Representatives of the three powers should immediately start talks to issue a decision to calm down spirits in the Army and reestablish public order, Moldovan Deputy Speaker Dumitru Diacov told BASA-press. Diacov said the current situation in the National Army is "difficult and extraordinary."

Commenting on a statement issued by a group of Moldovan officers that they will follow the Supreme Commander's orders, Diacov said this reveals the alert among officers. On the other hand, it also denotes the pressure put on government and is an attempt to maintain the situation in the Army prior to the Constitutional Court ruling.

"The officers' statement runs counter to the Constitutional Court ruling, but it does not mean that the signers' opinion should be ignored," said Diacov. He also said the Army is partly "out of the constitutional regime."

Diacov said the parliamentary and cabinet leadership have started consultations and have decided to await Snegur's return from the Baltic states to examine the situation in the Army.

"We must find a solution as soon as possible. We are talking about an army here and therefore the problem should be addressed with utmost responsibility," said Diacov. He added "the solution should be found in common accord."

President Snegur will arrive in Chisinau tonight from his visit in Estonia and Lithuania.

As it was reported by two sources, General Creanga, who was reinstated as defence minister in the virtue of yesterday's Constitutional Court ruling, was at his apartment today. He did not attempt to enter the Defence Ministry building awaiting the Supreme Commander's return.

Moldova: Snegur Calls On Premier Sangheli To Dismiss Creanga

AU0604174696 Bucharest Radio Romania Network in Romanian 1600 GMT 6 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Mircea Snegur, president of the Republic of Moldova, sent a letter to Prime Minister Andrei Sangheli today, which stresses that numerous embezzlements, tolerated by the defense minister General Pavel Creanga, have been registered in the Armed Forces of the Republic of Moldova. President Mircea Snegur is prepared to wait until 8 April for the government's proposals on the dismissal of the minister of defense and the appointment of another person to that post.

Last Thursday, the Constitutional Court rejected President Snegur's decree on the dismissal of General Creanga as illegal, considering that the president ignored the need for the prime minister's endorsement, thus violating the principle of the separation of powers in the state, our correspondent in Chisinau Valentin Tigau reports.

Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan: Kazakhstan Gains WTO Observer Status

LD0704180396 Almaty PANORAMA in Russian
5 Apr 96 p 5

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] PANORAMA reported earlier that Kazakhstan has been preparing to become a member of the World Trade Organization [WTO]. According a report from the USAID consortium, the republic has completed the first phase of entering this international organization.

President Nursultan Nazarbayev had a meeting with WTO Director General Peter Sutherland, and said that Kazakhstan was interested in joining the WTO and in the full integration of Kazakhstan's economy with this multifaceted trading system. [passage omitted]

A U.S. representative stressed the importance of the fact that Kazakhstan will not introduce measures contradicting WTO rules during the entry process. Setting up the working group completed the first step in Kazakhstan's application to join the WTO, as a result of which it automatically obtained WTO observer status.

The next step is preparation and submission of a "draft memorandum on foreign trade rules" to the WTO Secretariat. The memorandum will be considered as a working document at the beginning of the summer by the working group. Questions from members of the working group and the government of Kazakhstan's answers to them in written form will be considered in the second half of the year. If answers to the questions are satisfactory, then negotiations that may last more than a year will start approximately at the beginning of next year, on condition that Kazakhstan and its main trading partners do not quickly agree on concessions and duties due to be approved before, during, and after admission to the WTO [sentence as published]. It is envisaged that the entire process will take two years, before Kazakhstan becomes an authorized member of the organization.

USAID notes that admission to the WTO will open broad opportunities for Kazakhstan's producers and consumers to acquire goods at cheaper prices. Besides, local and foreign investors as well as companies engaged in trade will obtain benefits from stable and favorable trading rules for Kazakhstan's goods abroad.

In addition to Kazakhstan's complete integration into the world economy, WTO membership will make it possible to increase the volume of trade and ensure admission to the WTO disputes-solving mechanism.

Kazakhstan: Sources Say Stocks of Radioactive Uranium-235 Disappearing

NC0504170296 Paris AFP in English
1629 GMT 5 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Almaty, April 5 (AFP)—Stocks of highly radioactive Uranium-235 are being stolen at a growing rate in Kazakhstan, which has a quarter of the world's uranium reserves, Kazakh sources said Friday [5 April].

So much has been stolen that, in November and December, enough U-235 vanished in one province alone to make several nuclear bombs, the daily KARAVAN BLITZ [paper's name as received] newspaper has reported.

"Workers in uranium treatment plants, with the complicity of police who guard the plants, have stolen containers of U-235 then sold them to trading entities which ship them to Russia," said Murad Edreshev, an official of the Kazak committee against organized crime and corruption.

Besides Russia, Edreshev said he did not know the destination of the uranium.

In reports Thursday and on March 22, KARAVAN BLITZ said more than 100 kilograms (220 pounds) of U-235 were stolen in November and another 149 kilograms (328 pounds) in December in Ust-Kamenogorsk province, in the east of former Soviet republic.

The province is near the Chinese border and is the site of several uranium treatment plants.

The government has said it has arrested suspected thieves, and added that it would need the cooperation of police in Novosibirsk, in Russian Siberia, to follow up its investigation.

But despite these arrests "thefts are continuing," said a Kazakh nuclear physician who asked to remain anonymous.

"With 145 kilograms of U-235, you can build four to five atomic bombs," he said, adding that these could be "nice and powerful bombs."

Kazakhstan has a quarter of the world's uranium reserves on its territory, according to official figures. It also possesses several plants at which the ore is treated.

The east of the Central Asian country is home to several weapons- testing centers which are controlled by the Russian army, Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev has said.

Kazakhstan unexpectedly became the world's third-biggest nuclear power, after the United States and

Russia, following the collapse of the Soviet Union when it became an independent state.

Since early 1995, however, it has renounced nuclear arms. Its last warhead was destroyed in a laboratory in June, while others have been sent to Russia.

Kazakhstan: Radioactive Metal Thefts Spreading in East Kazakhstan

LD0604113996 Almaty KARAVAN-BILTS in Russian 4 Apr 96 pp1,2

[FBIS Translated Text] On 26 March, 'KARAVAN-BLITS' reported the unusual theft of a rather dangerous radioactive substance, Uranium-235, from the territory of the Ulba joint stock holding company.

Attempts to find out the details have come up against a stereotype excuse from officials — they say that it falls into the category which could raise an international scandal and that therefore all information has been marked "Top Secret." However, Murat Yerdeshev, head of the Kazakh State Investigation Committee's Main Directorate for Fighting Organized Crime and Corruption Investigation Department, helped us to slightly lift the veil of mystery surrounding it. It was he who told us that this theft of Uranium in Ust-Kamenogorsk is not unusual at all, and that a series of similar thefts has been registered.

For instance, as far back as 7 December last year, personnel from a department of the main directorate for fighting organized crime and corruption for East Kazakhstan region, jointly with a directorate of the Committee for National Security, stopped a VAZ-2106 car as it was leaving Ust-Kamenogorsk. When they examined it they discovered and confiscated the following radioactive substances: Uranium weighing 4.1 kg; 1 kilogram of thorium; and 10 ingots of metal indium weighing 18.36 kg. There were two Kazakh citizens in the vehicle and criminal proceedings have been instituted against them.

Later, during another operational search measure, officers found another 145.7 kg of uranium. On 10 December, one more criminal case was instituted into another theft, this time of 20 boxes of radioactive thorium weighing a total of 437.6 kg and worth around 400,000 tenge.

It was established during the preliminary investigation that the "leakage" of especially valuable and expensive metals is coming from two enterprises in Ust-Kamenogorsk — the lead and zinc combine and the Ulba state holding company.

As it turned out, two Ust-Kamenogorsk inhabitants had simply decided to make a quick buck. Knowing that this "commodity" would be sold at a high price and only for foreign currency, they started looking for a way to steal it. They soon found a buyer. The people who wanted to earn money by crime showed a striking level of activity. Even today, as they unravel the criminal chain, State Investigation Committee staff have detained nine people and taken a preventive measure — a written undertaking not to leave the country — against several others.

The problem of getting radioactive substances out of guarded installations was solved quite simply. The thieves include workers at those enterprises responsible for storage, and even vigilant representatives of the intradepartmental guard. Whole batches of radioactive substances were found at the homes of some intradepartmental guard staff: in one person's garage, while another had them in a hidden storeroom. Incidentally, the thieves got so excited that they started stealing the expensive goods from each other.

The radioactive trail also stretched across the transparent borders of the neighboring state [Russia]. The specific goods, already bought illegally in Kazakhstan, were found on two Russian citizens in Novosibirsk. In addition, Russian Federal Security Service officials intend in future to render assistance to our law enforcement bodies in investigating this difficult case.

Kazakhstan: Chechen Diaspora Favor Nazarbayev To Head Mediation

LD0504184896 Almaty Kazakh Television First Program Network in Russian 1400 GMT 5 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Chechen and Ingush cultural centers in Kazakhstan have held a conference on the Chechen problem.

[Begin unidentified correspondent recording] The main question, naturally, is the war in Chechnya, which is bringing sorrow, pain, and suffering. [passage omitted]

Representatives of the Chechen and Ingush diaspora in Kazakhstan, which is made up of more than 70,000 people, today sent a letter to Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev, asking him to take part in the negotiating process to achieve a peaceful settlement to the conflict, which had been proposed by the president of Russia. As Andarbek Indalov, the chairman of the Chechen section of the Vaynakh Association, noted in his speech, our president's personal authority in the political arena could promote a peaceful settlement. I remind you that right back at the beginning of the war Nursultan Nazarbayev put himself forward as a mediator in peace talks. The day before yesterday [3 April], speaking to Russian journalists in Kazan, the president once again confirmed his readiness to undertake a peace-keeping mission.

The conference also discussed refugees problems and the organization of humanitarian aid for Chechnya. [end recording]

Uzbekistan

Uzbekistan: President Karimov Meets U.S. NATO Envoy

LD0604110096 Tashkent PRAVDA VOSTOKA in Russian 6 Apr 96 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] President Islam Karimov yesterday met a delegation led by Ambassador Robert Hunter, permanent representative of the United States to NATO.

The head of our country said that relations between Uzbekistan and the United States are growing ever stronger. The further development of cooperation within the NATO Partnership for Peace program is significant for Uzbekistan too, the president said. The U.S. mission's visit to Uzbekistan will create good preconditions for strengthening our developing relations.

The further development of cooperation was discussed during the conversation.

Sadyk Safayev and Bakhtiyor Ghulomov, state advisers to the president of Uzbekistan, Foreign Minister Abdulaziz Komilov, and Defense Minister Rustam Akhmedov took part in the reception.

Stanley Tuemler Escudero, U.S. ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to Uzbekistan, was present at the reception.

The same day, the delegation of the U.S. mission to NATO visited the Uzbek Foreign and Defense Ministries, where talks took place.

Uzbekistan: President Karimov Meets Kazakh, Kyrgyz Premiers

LD0604101096 Tashkent PRAVDA VOSTOKA in Russian 6 Apr 96 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] On 5 April, Uzbekistan's President Islam Karimov received Kazakhstan Prime Minister Akezhan Qazhygeldin and Kyrgyzstan Prime Minister Apas Dzhumagulov, who are in our country to take part in a routine meeting of the Council of Prime Ministers of the signatory countries to the treaty to create a single economic area in Central Asia.

Islam Karimov noted that the Council of Prime Ministers is playing an important part in carrying out the measures outlined in the treaty to create a single economic area, signed by the three fraternal countries. He stressed that the processes which have been developing recently on the territory of the former Soviet Union cannot have any negative impact on economic and cultural cooperation between Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan, for the peoples of these countries are closely linked by bonds of centuries-old fraternity. Uzbekistan's leader pointed out factors making economic integration among the three countries necessary. These are common communications networks, power sources, water resources, the common nature of their markets, and the closeness of their languages and souls. This is why the treaty to create a single economic area is enjoying hearty approval and support among the peoples of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan. Cooperation on the basis of this agreement is being coordinated by the Interstate Council Executive Committee. In particular, active work is being conducted in line with the program for our countries' economic integration up to the year 2000.

Giving a positive assessment of the work done under the treaty, President Islam Karimov pointed out that the existing potential has not been fully exploited, as our peoples expect. He expressed confidence that the Tashkent meeting of the Council of Prime Ministers will outline measures to raise the effectiveness of the use of these huge opportunities.

Kazakhstan Prime Minister Akezhan Qazhygeldin and Kyrgyzstan Prime Minister Apas Dzhumagulov said that the Council of Prime Ministers will act resolutely to strengthen the centuries-old friendship among the three countries' peoples.

Matters related to the development of economic cooperation between Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan were also discussed at the meeting.

Uzbekistan's Prime Minister Utkur Sultanov and First Deputy Prime Minister Ismail Jurabekov attended the meeting.

Uzbekistan: Guards Step Up Controls on Border With Turkmenistan

LD0504163396 Almaty KARAVAN-BLITS in Russian 4 Apr 96 p 4

[FBIS Translated Text] Tashkent — Uzbekistan's border troops have marked their fourth anniversary. Last year alone the "green caps" detained about 300 violators, stopped over 20 border-crossing attempts by armed groups from Afghanistan, and engaged in more than 10 exchanges of fire. They intercepted 150 weapons and 300 kg of drugs.

The Uzbek border guards keep aloof within the CIS. For instance, they stayed away from the recent Dushanbe meeting of the heads of the border troops of former Soviet republics. According to latest reports, the Uzbek "green caps" have stepped up controls on the border with Turkmenistan in the area of Tashauz [northern Turkmen region] and dropped an "iron curtain" against smugglers transporting food in trucks to the neighboring republic.

Armenia

Armenia: Presidential Statement on Import of Right-Wing Grouping

NC0504144396 Yerevan NOYAN TAPAN in English 1608 GMT 4 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Yerevan, April 4 (NOYAN TAPAN)—On Tuesday [2 April], Armenian President's press-secretary Levon Zurabyan made public a statement titled "About Formation of Political Institutes in Armenia", which in particular reads:

"Establishment of a common camp of right-wing forces favoring liberalism, independent economic initiative and private property is one of the first priorities of the President as it sets basis for a stable political system. Creation of UIBA (Union of Industrialists and Businessmen of Armenia) is the first step taken in this direction.

"It will be followed by establishment of new organizations unifying different groups of owners.

"At the same time we should realize that this is a long process and final formation of the 'Republican' party may only happen in 2-3 years.

"Despite frequent statements voiced in the opposition press, there is no disagreement between the President and the 'Republic' block in this issue."

Replying to NT [NOYAN TAPAN] correspondents question, what is the role of already existing organizations of owners under this program, Mr. Zurabyan said, "President acts as a politician who takes responsibility to unify all these small separate organizations."

Armenia: Karabakh News Conference on Failure of 3-Way Talks

NC0504150896 Yerevan ARAGIL ELECTRONIC NEWS BULLETIN in English 1015 GMT 4 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Stepanakert ("AZG" daily — ANIS [not further specified]), 04/04/96 — Tri-lateral negotiations for resolution of the Karabakh conflict, held in Moscow on 26-30 March, have finished with no results, since the sides did not accept any changes in their positions, RMK [Republic of Mountainous Karabakh] Foreign Minister Arkadi Ghukasyan said during a press conference held in Stepanakert on 3 April.

Still, Mr. Ghukasyan said the negotiations were positive since, for the first time, a special attention was drawn to the discussion of RMK's status. Though discussion was of general character, he believes it served as a means to find out the positions of the sides.

Arkadi Ghukasyan qualified the declaration of the Azeri side, about providing widest autonomy existing in world, as non-serious, since Azerbaijan is not able to define this autonomy. The Azeri side insists on the principle of territorial integrity which is, naturally, not acceptable for the Karabakh side. According to RMK Foreign Minister, co-chairmen and members of Minsk group have seen that Azerbaijan is not ready to discussion of RMK's status.

Though a rather balanced project reflecting many issues of interest of the sides has been proposed for discussion of the Karabakh's security problem, the Azeri side proposed its project of regional security which, according to Mr. Ghukasyan, was illogical and could not meet critics. No progress has also been reported in discussion of the Grand Political Agreement.

Arkadi Ghukasyan said that, opposed to this, many issues, raised by the Karabakh side meet understanding of the mediators. He believes that the mediators now have no doubt in RMK's right for self defense, as well as about the right of Armenia to provide aid to Karabakh, and be its physical, legislative, and political guarantor in case of a military aggression of Azerbaijan.

RMK Foreign Minister said that representatives of the Armenyan community of Southern Azerbaijan, and that of Azeri community of Mountainous Karabakh participated in the negotiations this time. According to Mr. Ghukasyan, RMK has no claims in regard with the territories of Southern Azerbaijan, but Armenians living in these territories have similar rights to return to their homes, like the Azeris who lived in Shusha.

Armenia: 'All-Armenian Congress' Statement on Rights for Karabakh

NC0504200296 Yerevan NOYAN TAPAN in English 1538 GMT 4 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Yerevan, April 5 (NOYAN TAPAN)—"We'd like to remind the Armenian authorities about their responsibility to adhere to the aims of the Karabakh movement and fulfill Supreme Council resolution of July 8, 1992 which demands consistent protection for the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic [NKR] and regards as inadmissible any international or domestic document treating NKR as part of Azerbaijan," statement by organizations engaged in preparation of the All-Armenian Congress "In Support of Nagorno-Karabakh Republic" reads.

This document, adopted on April 4 conference, also notes that Armenian political forces are concerned over frequent statements by mediating countries and representatives of international organizations saying that Nagorno-Karabakh is to remain a part of Azerbaijan with status of autonomous republic. Participants of the conference consider unacceptable any concessions in issues where footholds were gained by bloodshed and unprecedented sacrifices of the Armenian people.

According to the initiator of the Congress, representatives of the Democratic party of Armenia Aram Sargisyan, the main purpose of the Congress is to reiterate the will of the Armenian people regarding the Karabakh problem and remind to the international community about the fact that the Armenian people has a single priority — protect Karabakh's right of self-determination.

According to member of bureau of the National-Democratic Union David Vardanyan, Artsakh's [Karabakh's] problem among other things is a security concept for Armenia. He said that losing Artsakh means threatening Zangezur [southern Armenia] and as a result losing Armenia as well.

Head of the National Industrial and Civil Union Zolyan voiced his surprise at indifference of the authorities in respect to the different viewpoints on Artsakh's problem and noted that if the common will of the Armenia people is not spoken by the official bodies, this task is to be taken by healthy forces of the society. According to him, we should rely first of all on our own forces not forgetting about the importance of allies.

The conference also heard representatives of the opposition parties.

Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan: Defense Ministry Statement on 'Aviation Attacks'

NC0604114296 Baku TURAN in English 0021 GMT 6 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baku, 06 April 1996, TURAN — Today Azerbaijan's Defence Ministry has distributed the statement, which reads:

"On April 5, 1996 Russian television distributed absolutely false information about use of territory of Azerbaijan for aviation attacks against settlements on the territory of Chechen Republic.

"Once again we have to state with regret that distribution of such anti-Azerbaijani information in Russian mass media has gradually acquired the character of organised propogandist campaign aimed at breaking of good-neighbourly bilateral relations between Russia and Azerbaijan.

"Azerbaijan's Defence Ministry has categorically refutes information that air space and airports of Azerbaijan are allegedly used during military activities in the Chechen conflict zone and we think that later on Russian media will use the information of more serious and reliable sources".

Commenting on this statement, high-ranking officer in the Defence Ministry noted that in October, 1995 "non-indentified planes" bombarded Chechen village of Roshni-Chu. That time the Russian also said that those were Azerbaijani planes.

"However, Azerbaijan's anti-air defence has registered that Roshni-Chu has been bombarded by eight MIG-23 and SU-25 planes, which came from Russia's military bases in Armenia and Georgia", the officer noted.

He said the information that the Russian side does not have possibility to indentify belonging of the planes, which two days ago bombarded Shalazhi village, is not serious. "Radio location radar of Russia's Defence Ministry located in Gabala (north-west of Azerbaijan), in 350 kilometers from Shalazhi village, gives the opportunity to control flights not only in this region, but also objects flying from the Caspian Sea to Indian Ocean", the same source noted.

Azerbaijan: Aliyev Denies Azerbaijan Used for Chechen Aircraft

LD0604205496 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 2036 GMT 6 Apr 96

[Sevindzh Abdullayeva and Viktor Shulman]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BAKU, April 6 (ITAR-TASS) - Azerbaijani President Geydar Aliyev denied Russian media reports that Azerbaijan provides its soil for the deployment of Chechen rebel aviation and transit of arms to Chechnya.

Speaking at a People's Assembly in Baku on Saturday, Aliyev described the reports as "slanderous and absolutely groundless."

He quoted some trustworthy sources as saying that such news is spread by ex-Azerbaijani President Aayaz Mutalibov, ex-Prime Minister Suret Guseinov, ex-Defence Minister Ragim Kaziyev and other former high-ranking officials.

The Azerbaijani leadership categorically denounces such provocative moves which aim at undermining Azerbaijani-Russian relations, Aliyev said.

At the same time, he stressed that no force can break friendly and good-neighbourly relations between Azerbaijan and Russia.

Speaking about the situation in the republic, Aliyev noted that it remains tense mainly because of the consequences of the Azerbaijani-Armenian conflict and internecine strife, as well as some forces' desire to seize power by all means.

The president believes that the success of the Karabakh settlement will depend on public consensus.

He noted that despite a controversial attitude towards the more than two-year-old ceasefire, the majority of people in Azerbaijan agree that this is an important achievement and a step towards the strengthening of the republic's independence.

"Azerbaijan is against a resumption of hostilities and bloodshed. Azerbaijan wants the ceasefire to develop into a lasting peace and will do everything possible to achieve this goal," he said.

Azerbaijan: Aliyev on Need To End Activity of 'Subversive Groups'

LD0504193296 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1746 GMT 5 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BAKU, April 5 (INTERFAX)—President of Azerbaijan Geydar Aliyev has reiterated the need to end the activity of what he called subversive groups and give a principal evaluation of the events of 1994-1995, when state coups were attempted in the country.

The public should be informed of the essence of the developments, including the unsuccessful attempted state coups in October 1994 and March 1995, Aliyev said while opening a conference on the recent public and political processes in the country in Baku Friday.

Azerbaijani National Security Minister Namig Abbasov said at the conference that some of the attempted coups' organizers and executors had been arrested and punished, but some had managed to escape.

Among those punished, Abbasov named former president Ayaz Mutalibov, former prime minister Suret Huseynov, former defense minister Ragim Gaziyev and others who have been accused of committing "state crimes against Azerbaijan."

Abbasov proposed that Azerbaijan request the corresponding Russian authorities to extradite these persons to Azerbaijani law enforcement agencies.

Abbasov accused Armenia of involvement with the Sadval organization, whose members had been charged with launching the bomb attack on the Baku metro in March 1994 when an explosion in a metro car killed 19 people and injured another 49.

The Armenian special services, "in cooperation with the special services of a certain great power," have continued to carry out sabotage and subversive actions against Azerbaijan, he said.

The Sadval group is also active in the internal Russian republic of Dagestan, Abbasov said. He proposed that the sitting adopt another appeal to the Russian leadership requesting it to ban this organization's activity.

The nationwide conference will be continued on Saturday.

Georgia

Georgia: Shevardnadze: Chechen Plan First Step in Caucasus Peace

LD0504171396 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1504 GMT 5 Apr 96

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Chechen peace plan outlined by Russian President Boris Yeltsin can become the first genuine step in establishing peace in the Caucasus, Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze said.

In a speech to the Turkish parliament, he said time has now come for the Caucasian states to think about their own region.

Shevardnadze said he and Turkish President Suleyman Demirel were unanimous that rapid implementation of key regional economic projects must help towards productive cooperation between the countries concerned rather than degenerate into unhealthy rivalry.

The Georgian leader said his new initiative, Peaceful Caucasus, whose principles were laid down in what is known as the Tbilisi declaration is aimed at achieving just that. He said these principles were in line with the interests of all regional states because of being universal.

He spoke of having discussed measures for regional peace with his Russian counterpart Boris Yeltsin.

The two countries signed a total of eleven agreements, presidential national security advisor Archil Gegeshidze told a news briefing in Tbilisi. These include an easing of visa controls, setting up customs checkpoints and mutual legal aid in civil, family and criminal cases.

Other agreements relate to communications, military training, science and technology, energy and rail links.

Gegeshidze also pointed to a joint declaration stating progress in bilateral relations and intention to promote traditional ties of friendship with each other.

Georgia: Defense Minister Addresses Parliament on Abkhaz Problem

LD0504161896 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1428 GMT 5 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TBILISI, April 5 (INTERFAX) — It will be difficult to resolve the Abkhazi problem without cooperation with the neighboring states, said Georgian Defense Minister Vardiko Nadibaidze in an address to the Georgian parliament Friday. The parliament was discussing the Abkhaz issue in response to the question of whether Georgia is able to resolve Abkhazia's problem today.

Nadibaidze's statement aroused negative reactions from the deputies, according to our Interfax correspondent. However, the debates were postponed to April 6 as parliament chairman Zurab Zhvania insisted.

The Georgian army is today fully manned and is ready to demonstrate its combat efficiency in the exercises scheduled for the near future, Nadibaidze said.

Georgia: Minister Denies Extension of Russian Peacekeepers' Mandate

LD0604131696 Tbilisi IBERIA in Georgian 1228 GMT 6 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Tbilisi, 6 Apr — Georgian Foreign Minister Irakli Menagharashvili has categorically denied reports alleging that an agreement had been reached to extend the mandate of the Russian peacekeeping forces [in Abkhazia]. He said that no such decision had been made, adding that unless the Georgian proposal to change the mandate of the troops deployed in the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict zone to give them policing functions was accepted, Georgia would oppose any extension of the mandate.

Georgia: Russia Presents 'Virtual Ultimatum' on Border Controls

LD0804105096 Tbilisi IBERIA in Georgian 1010 GMT 8 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Tbilisi, 8 Apr — Russian Federation Deputy Foreign Minister Boris Pastukhov has given the Georgian side a virtual ultimatum, saying that Georgia will be able to join Russia in guarding waters off Abkhazia only if it joins the treaty on the joint protection of borders, which was signed by several CIS member states including Russia. If Georgia signs this treaty, it will mean that Russian and Georgian border guards will jointly carry out immigration control at Georgian airports, including Tbilisi airport.

Georgia: Further on Prosecutor's Accusations of Abkhaz 'Atrocities'

LD0504164296 Tbilisi Radio Tbilisi Network in Georgian 1400 GMT 5 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In his speech at a meeting of the Georgian Parliament, Georgian Prosecutor General Jamlet Babilashvili produced horrific facts on the genocide of ethnic Georgians by Abkhaz separatists. Evidence given by eye-witnesses has exposed atrocities committed by separatists and murderers hired by them. In particular, he said: What the separatists did and are still doing in Abkhazia is by no means an ethnic conflict resulting from national insult or vengeance. The materials collected prove that the separatists, together with the confederates of the North Caucasus and other foreign like-minded people, have planned an organized conspiracy to create a fundamentalist state in the Caucasus. In order to implement their intent, taking into account the geopolitical situation of the region, it was necessary that ethnic Georgians, the majority of Abkhazia's population, be eliminated or driven out and that the territory and the adjacent Black Sea coastline be occupied. That is why thousands of foreign murderers and bandits tainted with the poison of separatism and nationalism were sent to Abkhazia to fight against indigenous Georgian population and the whole of Georgia.

According to preliminary data, Abkhaz separatists and murderers hired by them shot dead, hanged, or burned up to 7,000 ethnic Georgians because of their ethnic origin alone, mutilated hundreds of people, burned down up to 10,000 houses belonging to ethnic Georgians, and on pain of death drove hundreds of thousands of civilians from their homes.

The prosecutor general said in his speech that investigation had already revealed about 20 organizers and over 700 immediate perpetrators of this hideous crime against humanity, whose hands are stained with the blood of ethnic Georgians.

The crimes are being investigated further.

Georgia: Fights Break Out in Parliament Session on Abkhazia

LD0604170996 Tbilisi BGI in Russian 1330 GMT 6 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A Georgian Parliament debate on the Abkhaz problem turned into a fistfight on 6 April. It happened after a statement by Zurab Noghaideli, a member of the Georgian Union of Citizens, saying that the demands to declare Russia an aggressor were nothing other then an attempt to unleash an anti-Russian hysteria. In the end, parliament decided to continue the debate on the Abkhaz problem on 10 April. BGI correspondent Tomas Chagelishvili has details:

During the heated debate, a demand by Mamuka Giorgadze from the National Democrat faction to declare Russia an aggressor was rejected by less radical parliament members. They said that deputies should be more diplomatic and avoid pinning labels.

A statement by deputy Zurab Noghaideli saying that some members were trying to unleash an anti-Russian hysteria exhausted the opposition's patience. Passions were running so high that the chairman of parliament, Zurab Zhvania, announced a 10-minute break in proceedings. Agitated deputies continued their argument in the lobby. Finally, National Democrat Giorgi Chelidze slapped Kakha Chitaia, the chairman of the Committee for Foreign Relations, in the face, and a fistfight broke out. Holds from free-style wrestling were also used. It took some time to separate the deputies.

The session then continued. Mamuka Giorgadze apologized to everyone. He explained the deputies' unrestrained behavior by saying that everyone's heart bleeds for Abkhazia.

Lithuania

Lithuania: Brazauskas, Snegur Comment on Russian-Belarusian Union

LD0504150696 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English
1339 GMT 5 Apr 96

[By Vladas Burbulis]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] VILNIUS, April 5 (ITAR-TASS) — Lithuanian and Moldavian presidents Algirdas Brazauskas and Mircea Snegur said that the formation of the Russian-Belarusian Community is a domestic affair of the Russian Federation and Belarus.

Replying to Itar-Tass at a news conference which was held by the heads of the two countries here on Friday, Brazauskas noted that "the Russian-Belarusian treaty will not have a negative influence on our relations with these neighbouring countries, which we regard as good."

"Economic problems apparently prodded Moscow and Minsk to move towards deepening integration processes," he added.

Snegur said that "we are not interested in the economic side of such integration, and we abide by another position in the political aspect." The Moldavian and Lithuanian presidents attended today a signing ceremony of four inter-government agreements: on trade and economic cooperation providing for mutual granting of the most favoured nation's treatment in trade, on establishing an air service between Vilnius and Chisinau, on cooperation between the interior ministries of the two states and on exchange of information between national news agencies ELTA and Moldpress.

Lithuiania: Russia Threatens To Cut Nuclear Fuel Supplies

LD0504164496 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network
in Lithuanian 1600 GMT 5 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Russian suppliers of nuclear fuel have said that as a result of actions taken by the Lithuanian procurator general and by state security department officials, the agreement with the Lietuvos Energija company may be revoked and the Lithuanian nuclear power station will not be supplied with nuclear fuel in April, the BALTIC NEWS SERVICE has reported.

Sergey Gorodkov, director of the Russian Energiya state company, told a news conference in Vilnius today that the activity of their agent, Soltira company, has been completely paralyzed. According to him, in order to purchase fuel in April Lithuania will immediately have to repay a $12 million debt and to pay in advance almost $20 million for fuel.

However, Lithuania does not have such funds and, together with Lithuanian Power Engineering Minister Saulius Kutas, they have failed to find a solution to this problem, Gorodkov told journalists after his meeting with leaders of Lithuanian energy sector.

Lithuania: Russian Duma Chairman on 'Good Prospects' for Relations

WS0804105896 Tallinn BNS in English
1300 GMT 6 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Vilnius, Apr 5, BNS — Gennadiy Seleznev, chairman of the Russian State Duma, says Russia's relations with Lithuania are developing most successfully compared with the other Baltic states.

In an interview with a Russian-language Ekho Litvy, newspaper, he said relations with Lithuania "have good prospects and are mutually beneficial."

"There is still a large unused potential for cooperation in trade and economy as well as in the areas of research, culture, education and information," Seleznev said.

The major problem in relations with Latvia, he said, is "the practice of discrimination against Russians in that country." He called Russia's relations with Estonia "unsatisfactory."

At the same time he stressed that Baltic countries cannot expect good relations with Russia while ignoring its security interests.

The prospect of NATO's approaching the Russian border "will force us to take adequate measures to guarantee our security," Seleznev announced. He stressed that this would lead to increased pressure and reflect negatively on bilateral relations.

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